



# A HISTORICAL SKETCH

of  
ROXBOROUGH  
MANAYUNK  
WISSAHICKON



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A HISTORICAL SKETCH  
OF  
ROXBOROUGH  
MANAYUNK  
WISSAHICKON

COMPILED FROM THE RECORDS OF

JOSEPH STARNE MILES

late secretary of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society

AND

REV. WILLIAM H. COOPER

Pastor of the Grace Lutheran Church, Roxborough

*Issued in commemoration of the Two Hundred  
and Fiftieth Anniversary of the community.*

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J. ELLWOOD BARRETT, *Chairman*

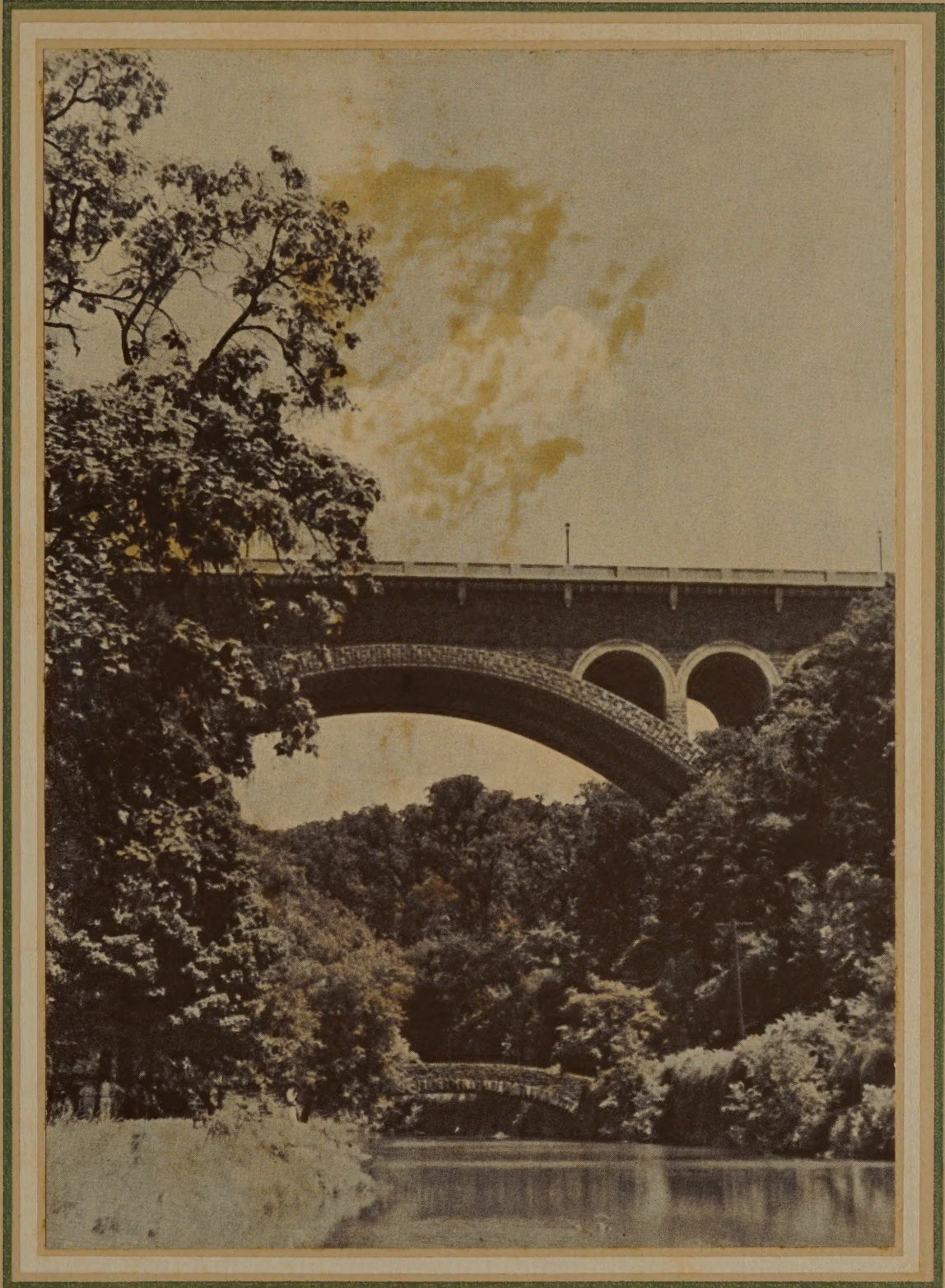
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*Henry Avenue Bridge over Wissahickon Valley*







# FOREWORD

*"This is my own, my native land."*

There is an unusual loyalty to the "home town" among the people of Roxborough, Manayunk and Wissahickon, which before its consolidation in the city of Philadelphia, was known as Roxborough Township. Formerly adjacent to, and now part of a great city, Roxborough still holds to many of the characteristics of a small community. Its geographical position on the ridge of land between the Wissahickon Creek and the Schuylkill River, which for so many years isolated it from surrounding sections, has preserved it a community equally progressive and unique.

Throughout its history, Roxborough has felt the impulse of religious influence. From "painful Kelpius . . . maddest of good men," as the poet Whittier observed, to the present, it has held a profound respect for the Christian Church. Its selections as the site for the construction of a great Cathedral, will certainly continue that influence for generations to come. One evidence of its commendable combination of religious and patriotic ideals, is the unbroken record of 109 years in the presentation of an Independence Day celebration that has become traditional. To those of our readers who have never witnessed this event, I would say, visit Roxborough any 4th of July, and see for yourself.

More than thirty churches of all denominations, successfully functioning to-day, give evidence of something real and substantial. It is no twist of chance that police records in Roxborough show a surprising lack of crime.

In industry, Roxborough has likewise made history. In 1690, William Rittenhouse established here the first paper mill in America, and that industry continues to be an important one in this section. The manufacturing centre and textile mills of Manayunk are known the world over.

When a committee of local people was

chosen to plan for the proper celebration of our two hundred and fiftieth birthday, it was agreed that no better monument could be erected to commemorate this event than to present to our people and to posterity, the story of Old Roxborough. Consequently, old documents and relics which had gathered the dust of years in the attics of our old families, were resurrected from their places of safe keeping, and will be exhibited during the celebration week, June 27th to July 4th. Several hundred persons will participate in a pageant-spectacle showing Roxborough, Manayunk and Wissahickon in review, and the old town will present a festive picture.

But the monument to be preserved will be this book. Joseph Starne Miles, the author, who before his death served faithfully as the Secretary of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society, took a great deal of joy and pleasure in recording the story of this community. His ancestors lived in Roxborough for many generations. Rev. William H. Cooper, who wrote the several additional chapters to bring the history up to date, is a direct descendant of Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, who traveled the old Ridge Road through Roxborough in the middle of the 18th century to establish St. Peter's Lutheran Church at Barren Hill. William B. Forney, Jr., who several years ago was the recipient of the Lions Club Award for outstanding community service, is responsible for the physical form and actual publication of this book. The value of the monument of which these three men have been the sculptors, will be measured by the manner in which this Historical Sketch is received.

J. Ellwood Barrett, *Chairman*

250th anniversary Celebration Committee.

Roxborough, in Philadelphia.

May 1, 1940.







## P R E F A C E

That this community in Philadelphia, officially known today as the Twenty-first Ward, and more affectionately termed by its natives, Roxborough, Wissahickon, and Manayunk, has a serene, prosperous, and noble history is beyond question.

Scattered fragments of authentic fact and interesting tradition, faithfully preserved and jealously guarded by families whose lineage retrocedes to the founding of this community of hills and vales, have come to light from time to time, to the delight and edification of many.

On this, the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of our founding, a Committee on History has been appointed to gather these bits of scattered and priceless information, and compile them into a single Historical Work, which shall endure as a store-house of information for us of today and those of tomorrow.

The foundation of this work is the heretofore unpublished, complete and authoritative History of Roxborough - Manayunk - Wissahickon, from the pen of Joseph Starne Miles, late Secretary of the Wissahickon Valley Historical Society. Mr. Miles, an able and accurate writer, was no less gifted as an artist. His pen renditions illustrate his work. The pen sketches made by Mr. Miles during his lifetime, have preserved many a landmark long since passed from existence. The Miles History is published just as Mr. Miles left it, and is made accessible to this committee through the kind interest of his widow, Mrs. Joseph Starne Miles.

The modern era of community activity, known to most and not far enough removed from any of us to have lost the lustre of reality, is the fruit of arduous and capable work by Rev. William H. Cooper, Pastor of the Grace Lutheran Church. The basic material for Rev. Cooper's story has been compiled from records carefully preserved by Miss Agnes Kelso, Librarian of the Manayunk Branch Free Library of

Philadelphia, and from information submitted by local church, civic, and fraternal organizations.

The Photographic illustrations by Mr. John Cholerton and Mr. William Crawford Faust—Lettering by Mr. George Rodenhausen—The map of the Twenty-first Ward by Mr. Amos Barnes—Contributions by the Philadelphia Record, Wm. C. Hamilton & Sons, Dill and Collins Inc., and Mr. Paul Krafft which were all vital to the completion of this book are gratefully acknowledged.

Acknowledgment of the many contributions to our book would be wholly inadequate without mention of the loyal, capable, and inspired services of Miss Anne Searle, Secretary of the Committee on Historical Publication. The patience, constancy, and personal interest of Miss Searle, woven into the very fibre of this book, is plainly visible to those privileged to associate with her in the long task of bringing from vision to reality, this record we now take pleasure in presenting to our friends of the community, on the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of its founding.

The following residents of Roxborough-Manayunk-Wissahickon served faithfully on the Historical Publication Committee:

Mr. Emmett Fitzpatrick, Mr. Stanley Hart Cauffman, Mr. Benjamin Miles, Rev. Wm. H. Cooper, Mr. Joseph H. Dunton, Mr. Al. Lebengood, Mrs. Herman Eisenberg, Miss Marie Roth, Mr. Francis McGill, Mrs. W. W. Frazier, Miss Kathryn Sobey, Miss Agnes Kelso, Mr. Amos Barnes, Mrs. J. Ellwood Barrett, Mr. Thomas U. Thring, Mr. William Stroud, Miss Wilhelmina Robinson, Mr. Miles Frederick, Mr. Edward L. McConnell, Mr. Grant Johnson, Mrs. Elmer Harlan, Miss Ruth Becker, Miss Norma Yates, Mrs. Conrad Scheffer.

William B. Forney, Jr., *Chairman*  
Historical Sketch Committee.







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# ROXBOROUGH

## A HISTORY



Containing an Account of the Old  
Ridge Road, Roxborough, During the  
Revolution and the Early Settlers.



*Pen and Ink Illustrations*

*By the Author*

JOSEPH STARNE MILES







THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY  
DEDICATED  
TO THE MEMORY OF  
MY MOTHER  
MARTHA MILES





## INTRODUCTION

A hundred and fifty years or more ago, during the early days, one of the old roads out of Philadelphia, wended its way in a northward direction, over hill and dale, through farm and woodland, by the river and crossing the creeks until it reached Reading, fifty odd miles away.

In the old records, it is called the "Great Road leading from Philadelphia to Reading."

Before crossing the line into Montgomery County, it passed through a small, straggling village, which consisted of a few houses scattered down the road like a "Stringtown on the Pike."

The village, together with the land from the Liberties of Philadelphia, five miles northward to the Montgomery County line and from the Schuylkill River, two miles northeastward, to the Germantown line, was then called "Roxborough Township." It is now the twenty-first Ward of Philadelphia. The village is now Roxborough and the "Great Road" is the Ridge.

This village, and I like to think of it as such, to me, has always been a most interesting place, situated as it is on the high ground between two beautiful valleys—the Schuylkill and the Wissahickon—with the old Ridge Road meandering along the highest part of this high ground and the old houses along both sides.

I still remember it, as it was in my early days—the quiet, peaceful air, the rural surroundings, the shady road, the views, the old weatherbeaten houses, the barns, the blacksmith shop, the wheelwright shop, the roadside inns and the country store.

I can still see a wagon load of hay coming down the pike, a cow or two led by a barefoot boy or an old man and on certain days of the week a great herd of steer.

This is Roxborough forty years ago.

Times have changed since then. The hay wagon is seen no more. No longer are cattle driven along the road. The quiet has been invaded by the automobile, the truck and the

trolley. The blacksmith shop and wheelwright shop are gone. In their stead are the ubiquitous garage and gasoline station. The roadside inns are going and these old houses with their inimitable stone work, gable ends and shingle roofs; their great chimneys and small pane windows are disappearing and as I have seen these old landmarks go, one by one, the thought occurred that some record of them should be made before they have all gone.

Some of these houses stood here long before the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Many of them saw the British Army march by, on the 25th of September, 1777—Foot-horse-cannon, in full regalia, with glittering swords and brilliant uniforms, with flags flying and drums beating, on their way from Phoenixville to occupy Philadelphia. On the fourth of the following month, in the gray of the early dawn, they saw the Pennsylvania Militia under General Armstrong pass by to the battle of Germantown; each man having but a piece of white paper in his hat to identify him as a soldier. These houses also saw the British march up the Ridge early in the morning of May 20, 1778; their faces flush with the anticipation of capturing Lafayette, only to return in the evening of the same day crestfallen and dejected at being outwitted by the young French General.

The sketches of the old houses are arranged in the order as one meets them in passing up the Ridge from Wissahickon to the County Line.

With the attempt to make this record, came the curiosity as to who lived in these houses in the old days, who built them, how did Roxborough come about and who settled it. Stories I had heard, which smacked of legend and tradition, only excited my curiosity rather than satisfied it. So came the determination to find the true story.

The preparation of this book has been a delight. If it is accepted in the same spirit, its mission shall have been accomplished.

JOSEPH S. MILES.





## PROLOGUE

When but a small boy, back in the late 80's, one summer day, I remember my father asking me if I would like to drive to Plymouth for a load of lime.

Oh, would I like to! A boy in his early teens, to drive all day, with the responsibility of a horse, a wagon and a load of lime. My boyish fancy rose to dizzy heights.

I had often made short trips but never one for all day. Plymouth was seven miles away, up in the Whitemarsh Valley beyond Roxborough and Barren Hill.

Upper Roxborough, through which I would pass, was far away in my young mind, and Wissahickon had hardly been heard of. I remember having gone up to Roxborough several times, with my father, to the Roxborough Baptist Church, but beyond that I had not ventured.

How delightful were those far-away days, the quiet, peaceful Sabbaths, the pleasant home life and the talk around the table, at which my father often spoke of the Leverings, the Starnes, the Latches, the Holloways, the Tibbens, the Joneses and others.

So that evening was spent in giving me instructions as to what to do, how to go, which way to turn and so on. If the horse cast a shoe, or anything got wrong with the harness or an axle broke, I was to go to George Edwards' blacksmith shop for repairs.

How I was to go anywhere with a broken axle I didn't know, neither did I know where the blacksmith shop was, but I must be on the lookout for it. I must also be sure to water the horse at the Fountain Hotel at Barren Hill.

The last instruction was unnecessary, for you may be sure I would give him a drink at every watering trough and a nibble of grass now and then along the way.

My dreams that night were of green fields, woods, meadows, flowers and sunshine; cows grazing under the trees and wading in the brook; rocks, old houses, barns and old mills.

My mother called me at five the next morning, cooked my breakfast and packed my lunch. As she kissed me goodbye on both cheeks, she

gave me further instructions as to what to do in case anything happened.

Five-thirty found me crossing the Schuylkill River on the Manayunk Bridge at the foot of Green Lane. The bridge at that time was called the "Pay Bridge" because it cost two cents to go over and two to get back. My father's coal and lime yard was along the river bank, just above the other end of the bridge.

I harnessed the old gray horse and hitched him to the lime wagon. I remember what a time I used to have harnessing the horse, especially in getting the collar over his head. It always stuck going over his eyebrows. To do this I had to climb up on the feed trough, for I couldn't reach his head from the ground. But the horse was gentle and assisted in the operation by pushing his head through the collar rather than backing away as the other horses did.

The lime wagon was painted light blue—an appropriate color for a lime wagon—but sometimes it was used for hauling coal, in which case the color was not so appropriate. The name on the wagon was painted by my own hand. I remember, in painting one of the letters, too much paint got on the brush and trickled all the way down to the bottom of the body of the wagon.

The wagon was an open one, without springs, so that in riding over the rough roads, I got pretty well shaken up.

I put a bag of oats in for the horse and by six o'clock, before the sun was high, we were ready for the journey.

Back across the bridge I drove; up the Main Street by the edge of the canal to Washington Street; along this street as it meandered through Mt. Vernon to Hipple Lane (now Fountain Street). Shortly after turning into Hipple Lane, we were out in the woods and in the country. Hipple Lane in those days was a cool shady dirt road. The lower end ran through a dark woods with a steep hill on the left and a deep ravine, through which ran a brook, on the right.

When we reached the top of the hill and turned on to the Ridge Road, I had a rare view

to the east across the Wissahickon Valley—hills dipping into valleys—valleys rising into hills—sometimes sharply, sometimes gradually—a barn topping a neighboring hill—two church spires in the distance at Chestnut Hill, two miles away as the crow flies.

What a day it was! How clear the sky! How fresh the air. It had rained continually for several days. The air had been washed clean. The trees and grass and all things green had been refreshed. The sky was dry and a light breeze blew from the west.

The Ridge Road was macadamized and along one side ran a horse car line. Every mile or so, there was a switch, into which a car might turn to permit one coming in the opposite direction, to pass. Now and then a car came tinkling along. On the sides of them was painted the name "Manayunk and Roxborough Inclined Plane and Railway Company" and across the ends the letters "M. & R. I. P. & R. W."

I remember the shady trees along the road—mostly maples, but occasionally a towering button-ball or a gigantic oak. One oak tree at Summit Avenue must have been four and a half feet in diameter, its branches reaching clear across the road.

I remember the quaint old houses, some close to the road, some standing back among the trees with cool green lawns. Sometimes they stood close together in groups, sometimes far apart. Some had front yards with whitewashed pale fences. Lilac bushes and Altheas grew in the yards. Clematis, wisteria and trumpet vines climbed the fences and gables. Drives with gateways led to the rear. Stables, carriage sheds and chicken houses, vines, grape arbors, and fruit trees I could see back of the houses—gardens, flowers, truck patches, stacks of fire wood, split and cut to lengths and piled under sheds ready for the winter.

Some of the houses had porches in front. Most of them were of the old style, with gable ends. Some were plastered, others were of stone with large stone quoins at the corners. Some had the north and west walls plastered while on the other two sides the stone was exposed. Further up the road I noticed the fronts built of

great long stones in even courses. What stones they were. Some were six feet long and a foot high. Some of the roofs were of shingle, others of tin. Some had small unobtrusive dormer windows, others had none. All of them had small paned windows. These seemed to me to give the houses a particular charm. In the first floor windows the lower sash was one pane higher than the upper. Some had beautiful doorways. Now and then we passed one with a beautiful lace-like cornice.

The houses all looked old. They were old. Some of them were very old. I noticed in the gable of one a stone bearing the date 1785, in another the date was 1794, still another 1795. The plastered ones were brown with age. Age and the weather had blended them with the natural surroundings. There was nothing striking nor conspicuous about them.

Some were quite small with great huge chimneys. What fireplaces there must have been inside! Great big ones, no doubt—large enough to walk into, with seats at the ends and iron cranes with chains holding pots and kettles over the fire.

A few of the houses were of the square type, with almost flat tin roofs, wide overhanging cornices and small attic windows. These houses had small porches in front with large fluted columns and heavy cornices.

There seemed to be no regularity to the houses nor to the road itself. Some of them stood at an angle to the road which twisted to the right and turned to the left, always going up, sometimes sharply, sometimes gradually.

The fences were of different kinds—pale fences, rail fences—some whitewashed, others not. Here and there stone walls took the place of fences, the stones being long and flat, laid without mortar.

Between the houses were views down into and across the Wissahickon Valley. What must these views be like in early Spring, with the various shades of green, accentuated here and there by a dark pine or hemlock—here and there clusters of dogwood flowers and half way down the hill an apple tree in blossom. Or in the Fall when the greens turn yellow and red



and brown and the pines and hemlocks still dark green. But in the Fall I would be back at school again, hard at work, with little time for scenery. How fortunate these folks were to live right in the heart of it.

The lanes, to the right, dipped down sharply to the Wissahickon and were soon lost among the trees. Just above Paoli Avenue I had a glimpse, to the west, across the Schuylkill Valley. I could see for miles away. Hills beyond hills, and beyond them more hills. This view was obstructed quite often by the ground rising slightly above the road.

Several stores were passed, with the sign "General Merchandise" painted on the porch cornice. On the porch stood rakes and shovels, hoes and kegs of nails, cans of paint, brooms, buckets and what-not. From the rafters hung brushes and dusters. Every available space was taken.

Not long after turning on to the Ridge from Hipple's Lane, we passed an old Inn—the Lafayette Hotel. The Inn yard was surrounded by a stone barn, a stone stable, carriage sheds and a shed large enough to accommodate two wagons loaded with hay. A loaded hay wagon stood in the yard with the horses hitched to it ready to start for the city. Another load stood under the shed. A man was leading a pair of horses from the stable to hitch to it.

Further on we passed Buttonball Inn, an old building standing under a great tall buttonball tree. Away up the Ridge was Lilly's Hotel, a long stone building standing in among the trees. The stones of the front were enormous long ones. In under the porch were two very graceful oval stone archways. One of them had been filled up with stone and plastered over.

An air of quiet and calm prevailed. There was no hurry, no hustle nor bustle. Not many people did I see, but the few that I did, seemed to be going about their work leisurely. Men were working in the fields, in truck patches, and in the barnyards. Here and there old men and old women were sitting on the front porches or in the open doorways. They nodded to me as I passed. Children stopped from their play and looked at me inquiringly.

Now and then a man or a woman was seen leaning over the front gate talking to a passerby. Occasionally a horse and wagon came jogging along. A milk wagon came jingling along from its early morning trip. A butcher wagon stood in the road, the butcher cutting meat on the tail-board under an overhanging hood, the customer standing by. A man came along leading a cow, the dogs barking at his heels. Chickens stood in the road, refusing to move until almost run over.

Now and then we passed a barn, with a great overhanging hay mow—a barnyard, an orchard, an open field. How wonderful it all was, the views ever changing.

Once I remember passing a wagon load of hay, the farmer seated away up on top. He hailed me and I hailed him back. A horsecar came along, the driver waved at me and I waved at him. I felt like a man, driving a horse all by myself, far away from home.

After passing Ship Lane (Port Royal Avenue) we were out in real farm country—farms and farmsteads along both sides of the way—wheat fields, hay fields, and corn fields, woodlands and meadows with cows grazing under the trees, while beyond lay the wooded hills of the Wissahickon and Schuylkill on either side.

But I must be on the lookout for Mr. Edwards' Blacksmith Shop. There it was, on the right. I stopped and made myself known to him and asked him to look things over. He, knowing my father, gladly did so and said everything was all right.

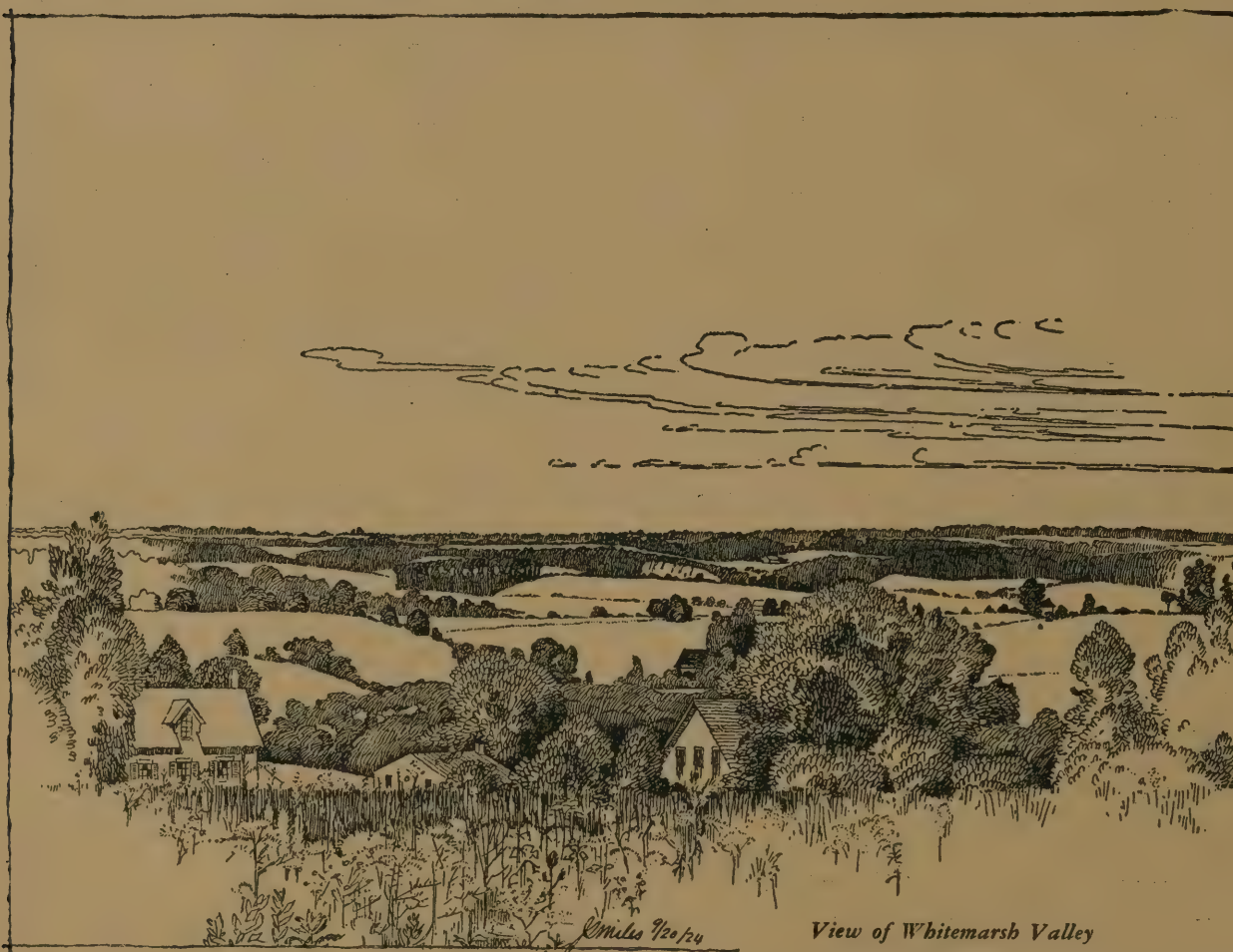
Mr. Edwards' Blacksmith Shop was a dilapidated one-story frame affair divided into two parts. One was for shoeing horses and the other was a sort of carriage or wagon shed. Adjacent to these was a two-story frame building which was so out of plumb, that it looked as if a good wind might blow it over. The front of the blacksmith shop was covered with tin signs advertising tobaccos of various brands. Black signs and blue signs with white letters. White signs with black letters. "Jolly Tar," "Musselman's Black Bass," "Peiper Heidsick" and other brands of chewing tobacco. On the door of the carriage house was painted a sign, covering the

whole door, advertising a certain kind of paint. A few coats of this paint would have done no harm to Mr. Edwards' shop. In fact, the same might be said of the old houses along the road.

When we reached the high point just before the road descends to Manatawna Avenue a wonderful view of the Whitemarsh Valley burst upon me. I turned into the field a little way to get a better view. I unhooked the check rein and allowed the horse to graze awhile. I had never seen such a view—a great broad valley

the letter "J." I counted the letters of the alphabet on my fingers and found the letter "J" to be the tenth letter of the alphabet. I wondered if that had anything to do with it.

A short distance beyond County Line the Wissahickon Valley ended and the view across the Whitemarsh Valley opened up to the north and east, so with a full view now of the Schuylkill Valley to the west I was kept busy for a while looking to the right and left and in front of me.



*View of Whitemarsh Valley*

with blue hills fading in the distance. Here and there little white farmhouses and barns—trees, clumps of trees, woods, fields—green fields, brown fields, yellow fields—wonderful! Oh, for the enthusiasm of a boy!

I remember passing the milestones—the eighth, the ninth and the tenth—curious old stones with Roman numbers carefully cut on them. The tenth, right near the County Line, looked peculiar, so I stopped for a closer view. I noticed the figure "1" of the ten looked like

A little further on, close to the road on the top of a bank to the right, stood a small white marble monument shaped like a tent, with letters cut in the sides of it. Stopping the horse again, I climbed up the bank to read the inscription. On one side the words were "On the grounds in the rear (to the north) of this stone, the American troops under Lafayette were encamped from the 18th to the 20th of May 1778." On the other side were cut the words, "About three hundred yards Southwest of this



place were encamped the Indian Scouts who were a part of Lafayette's command."

Looking in the direction indicated and on a knoll of ground about three hundred yards away I saw in my mind's eye the campfires of the Indian Scouts and to the north, toward Barren Hill, the tenth of the American troops. I took off my old straw hat and bowed my head in respect to Lafayette and these brave men.

Further on we arrived at the Fountain Hotel at the foot of a hill. According to my father's instructions, I stopped here to water the horse. The watering trough was a huge piece of soapstone hollowed out like a dug-out canoe. I remarked to the hostler what a large stone it was. He said he would measure it. He did so by stepping the length off with his feet, one foot after the other, heel to toe. It was eleven of his feet long. He said his shoes were a foot long, making the stone eleven feet long. It must have been that at least. His shoes were enormous. By the same method he measured the width, making it two and one-half feet. It was about two feet deep and hollowed out to within three inches or so of the sides and ends.

There was neither plug nor faucet, but a continuous stream of clear, sparkling water flowed from a pipe. I asked the hostler if it was an artesian well. He pointed to a tree which stood in the field about 200 yards away and said there was a spring under the tree and a pipe carried the water from it to the trough.

Curiosity led me to walk out to the tree and there I found the spring. A wall of stone against a bank had been built to protect it and some boards had been placed at the base of the wall, so the spring itself could not be seen, but the ground all around was marshy.

A man was harrowing in the field and as he drew near I questioned him about the spring. "Yes," he said, throwing his chin in the air and turning his head to one side, "that spring's over a hundred years old to my knowledge." Then, bringing his chin down again, he said, "When I was a boy, and I'm over seventy now, old Doc. Hiltner told me, and he was over eighty then, that when he was a boy, he helped to dig up the old wooden pipe that carried the water to

the wooden trough and put in an iron pipe. The people of the neighborhood depended on that trough for water, so when the wooden pipe rotted away, something had to be done."

As I walked back across the field to the wagon, those lines from "The Brook," by Tennyson, ran through my head—

*"For men may come and men may go,  
But I go on forever."*

After climbing into the wagon, the hostler hooked the check rein, and I gave him a little change. He thanked me, smiled and touched his hat.

The hotel stood in a valley between two sharp hills. At the top of the hill beyond the hotel we left the Ridge Pike and turned east to the Germantown Pike, going through Barren Hill, where we passed more interesting old houses. In the gable of a barn was a stone bearing the date 1814 and close by stood a house evidently of the same date though the date stone could not be seen.

I drove on through Marble Hill over fine level farming country but there were no views like those in Roxborough. Hills could be seen in the distance. Close by the road we passed two marble quarries. They were like long narrow gashes in the earth, cut out of the solid rock. The smaller one was filled with water to within twenty feet or so of the top, the larger one further on looked very deep and water could be seen in the bottom.

It was now getting on toward noon and the sun was high. I inquired how far Plymouth was and was told about a mile. By and by we reached Plymouth and the old Plymouth Meeting House standing in among the trees. At this point we turned into a road on the right and after driving a short distance arrived at the lime kiln. Being pretty well shaken up by the springless wagon and having had an early breakfast, I was ready for lunch, so while the wagon was being loaded with lime I gave the horse his bag of oats and ate the lunch my Mother had packed for me.

On returning to the Pike, it being yet early, I thought I would like to see the old Plymouth Meeting House, so I tied the horse to a hitching

post in front of the country store and crossed the road to the yard. Entering the gate, I walked up the shady drive. The building was a long, low one-story stone structure with gable ends and a shingle roof. One-half of the building was of red stone and the other half of a light-colored stone. Evidently one-half had been built before the other, although neither looked older than the other. The stones were irregular in shape and were not at all like those I had seen in Roxborough, either in shape or color. I liked the reddish-colored stone but didn't care much for the light colored. A spacious porch extended along the entire front of the building and returned along the ends. The floor of the porch was of irregular-shaped flat stones. Carriage sheds were in the rear and nearby was the sexton's house. I looked for the date stone in the gable but was surprised to find none.

An old man, whom I took to be the sexton, made his appearance and I asked him how old the building was. He said the red stone part was built about 1714 while that of light-colored stone was built in 1780. Both were destroyed by fire in 1868 but were immediately rebuilt in the same manner as before the fire.<sup>1</sup> When he found I was interested, he invited me to go inside. The walls were of great thickness. How refreshingly cool it was inside. One long large room was all the building had with a small gallery at each end. A wood partition with sliding panels divided the room into two when desired. The sexton said the men sat on one side of this partition and the women on the other, though the sliding panels were rarely used. Four huge stoves stood in the middle aisle, which ran lengthwise of the room. Benches were arranged on platforms along the side and end walls. There were three platforms, one above the other. The benches were of unpainted wood, with queer cut ends and two rails for a back. The woodwork throughout was unpainted. The walls were plastered but unpainted.

As I came away I pondered on what a quiet and peaceful place it was to go to church.

Untying the horse, we started homeward.

<sup>1</sup> W. A. Yeakel's *History of Whitemarsh* (Montgomery Co. Historical Society Notes 1895, Page 35).

When we came to the large quarry at Marble Hall, I tied the horse to a fence post and climbed the fence to see what the quarry looked like. It must have been a couple of hundred yards long, about eighty feet or so wide at the top and at least two hundred and fifty feet deep.<sup>1</sup> The sides were of solid marble, almost perpendicular. It must have been a good many years since it was worked, for great trees grew from crevices and narrow ledges and from almost impossible places in the rocky sides. At three points in the length of the quarry, in order to prevent the sides from crushing in, and in order to avoid building bracing, though it didn't look as if any bracing was required, the rock had not been cut away entirely, but had been left to form a natural brace from side to side. The under side of these rocky braces had been cut away, forming a series of natural arches or bridges. These three rocky bridges in the length of the quarry, the dark water away down at the bottom, the rocky sides, the trees growing out of the sides and around the edges made it look very weird and uncanny. I was glad to get away from it.

As we passed the smaller quarry further down the road, some boys were in swimming at the far end. Tying the horse again, I walked over to them. This quarry was much more inviting than the large one, as the water was near the top and it looked more like a lake. Trees grew along the edge and at the far end, where the boys were swimming was a sort of sand bank. I asked them how deep it was and they said "Oh, over a hundred feet."

Everything seemed to be "over a hundred." The old houses were over a hundred years old; the spring had been there for over a hundred years and now the water in the quarry was over a hundred feet deep.

When we reached Barren Hill, an old man was sitting on top of a low stone wall, under a

<sup>1</sup> The Hitner quarry at Marble Hall in 1858 had reached the depth of 242 feet. Considerable of the marble used in Girard College was obtained from Mr. Hitner's quarry. Theodore W. Bean's "History of Montgomery Co."

The Marble Hall quarries furnished the white marble used in building the Washington Monument at the National Capitol. H. W. Ruoff's "Biographical History of Montgomery Co." Page 8.

The Hitners of Marble Hall in 1851 donated to Pennsylvania a block of pure white marble on which the State coat of arms and Penn's Treaty with the Indians were carved. It was forwarded to Washington and embodied in the Washington Monument as a contribution from the Keystone State. H. W. Kriebel's "History of Montgomery Co." Page 187.



tree, along the road. I stopped and said to him, "Why do they call this place Barren Hill? I don't see anything barren about it. Everything looks green."

He said "Come down, sonny. I'll tell you all about it. Are you in a hurry?" It may be that I should have been, but I wasn't. What's time to a boy?

I got down from the wagon and climbed up on the wall beside the old man. He poked the ground with his cane until he had scratched the grass away from a small spot. He said, "Do you see that white shale? Well the ground just below the sod is like that all over the top of this hill. That's why they call it Barren Hill. Nothing will grow on it."<sup>1</sup>

Pointing to the Barren Hill Church, he said, "Over there where the church and graveyard are, and on beyond the Ridge Road for a hundred yards or so, it's the same kind of soil. Down the hill beyond the graveyard fence is good soil and on the other side of this road is good soil, but right on this strip of ground on the top of the hill the soil is like this, just white shale. Some people seem to think it was named after a family named 'Barren,' but it isn't. I've even heard people say some tombstones in the graveyard over there have the name of 'Barren' on them. Let's go over and see if we can find any."

The old man hobbled along and I followed him. We went over to the older part and read the names. We found lots of "Streepers" and plenty of "Keelys" but no "Barrens." Pointing to a group of tombstones in a corner by the fence, the old man said, "They call that Streepers' Corner."

We found "Hitners" and "Hiltners," "Hages" and "Hageys," "Frieses" and "Freases," but no "Barrens." The old man said, "Maybe it's in German." I didn't know much about German, nevertheless we looked for it in that tongue, but the nearest we came to it was "Bauer"—"John Andreas Bauer. Geböhren 1731. Gestorben 1793."

The oldest one we found that could be read

<sup>1</sup> Barren Hill was probably so named on account of the narrow ridge of barren soil near the Church. H. W. Kriebel's "Brief History of Montgomery Co." Page 196.

was "Johann Heinrich Kleinges Torendon, 1760." That one was in an excellent state of preservation. It was of soapstone and the fine old German Renaissance capital letters and figures were as clean and sharp as though they had been cut yesterday.

Most of the stones were of marble and could not be read at all. On one of the stones was the following curious epitaph:

*"Come look on me as you pass by,  
As you are now, so once was I.  
As I am now, so you will be  
And when death calls, then follow me."*

As we sauntered back to the wagon, the old man said, "Barren Hill is a very old place. It has a famous history, too. The church there—Saint Peter's Lutheran, isn't old. That was built in 1849, but the old church, that stood where that one stands now, was built in 1761. There was an old log school house close by the church that was built in 1758.

"The old church was built by Rev. Henry Melchoir Muhlenberg, father of Peter Muhlenberg of Revolutionary fame.

"During the Revolution both the American and British Armies used it at different times as a battery and as a stable.<sup>1</sup> Lafayette quartered there from the 18th to the 20th of May, 1778. His troops were camped just over there on the west side of the Ridge Road.<sup>2</sup>

"When the Rev. Frederick D. Schaeffer came there to take charge in 1790, he found the old church in such a dilapidated and dirty condition, from such usage, that a lot of repairing and cleaning had to be done to put it into shape again, and the people were so impoverished from being pillaged that only a few of the families remained.

"In 1884 some of the citizens, thinking the name of 'Barren' was a sort of stigma to the place, petitioned Gov. Hartranft to change it to Lafayette Hill. The name of the post office was changed to that, but the name of the place itself could not be. Barren Hill it always was to me and Barren Hill it always will be."

By this time we had arrived at the wagon. The old horse was showing signs of uneasiness.

<sup>1</sup> Theodore W. Bean's "History of Montgomery Co." Page 1150.

<sup>2</sup> General Wilkinson's Memoirs. Page 830.

He wanted to get home, so bidding the old man goodbye, we continued on our homeward way.

When we reached the Fountain Hotel, I watered the horse again and gave the hostler some more small change, for which he smiled and touched his hat again.

On the way up the hill, just after leaving the hotel, I got off and walked so as to give the horse that much less to pull. Again on the hill after passing Manatawna Avenue I walked.

The cows were beginning to saunter in from the fields, stopping now and again for a bite of grass; the sun was losing strength; the old horse's steps grew slower. The children were still playing and the old folks still sat on the porches. The horsecars seemed to carry more people. I supposed they were people coming home from town.

At sundown as the old horse trudged along

Main Street on the home-stretch toward the bridge, the six o'clock whistles were blowing. Men and women were pouring out of the mills and factories in hordes, hurrying and scurrying home. The bridges across the canal, connecting the mills with the Main Street, were black with people. Tomorrow they would hurry back.

What a difference between such scenes as these and those I had so lately left!

*"A time there was, 'ere England's brief began,  
When every rood of ground maintained its  
man;*

*For him light labour spread her wholesome  
store,*

*Just gave what life required, but gave no more,  
His best companions, innocence and health;  
And his best riches, ignorance of wealth."*

OLIVER GOLDSMITH,

The Deserted Village.



## CHAPTER I

# THE OLD RIDGE ROAD

### DERIVATION OF NAMES:

Roxborough! the Old Ridge Road! the Wissahickon! the Schuylkill and the Whitemarsh Valleys!

According to Mr. Watson, the Annalist, Roxborough was so named because Kelpius, the Hermit, on discovering the foxes burrowing in the rocks of the cellar of his cabin called the place "Rocksborrow." Be that as it may, a more appropriate name for Roxborough could not be found. With the eastern boundary bordered by the rocks and boulders of the Wissahickon, and the western boundary lined with the rocks and cliffs of the Schuylkill Valley, it is well named.

Neither could the Old Ridge Road have a more appropriate name. After climbing the long hill at Wissahickon, it literally crawls along the very backbone of the ridge of hills that lie between the Wissahickon and the Schuylkill Valleys.

In the Upland Court Records of 1677, patents for land, in and about the present City of Philadelphia, John Mattson, Swen Lom and Lacey Dalbo had 300 acres "on Schuylkill at Wissahitkonk," on the west side opposite the Wissahickon. This, according to Heckewelder, an Indian missionary, signifies in the Delaware Indian language, "catfish or yellow water stream." Other authorities say it is derived from a combination of "Wisaucksickan," meaning yellow-colored stream, and "Wisamickan," meaning catfish creek.

Of the yellow color, there is no doubt after a hard rain and as for the catfish, Charles V. Hagner<sup>1</sup> tells us thrilling stories of catfish at the Falls of Schuylkill, a short distance below the mouth of the Wissahickon, and these same catfish no doubt swam up the river and into the creek. "They were a migrating fish," says he, "and came from the sea annually in immense numbers, so numerous—I have seen it myself—as to blacken the narrow passages in the river.

They were perfectly black on the back and white on the belly, and were remarkably fine eating . . ."

On Thomas Holmes' map of Pennsylvania made in 1681, the Wissahickon is called "Whitpains Creek" after John Whitpain, who owned a large tract of land along the creek in the Whitemarsh Valley.

Schuylkill was the name given by the early Dutch explorers, meaning "hidden stream," because they passed by its mouth without seeing it. On P. Lindstrom's map of the Delaware River, the Schuylkill is designated as "Skiar eller linde kill." Skiar Kill in Swedish means "Brawling Creek." The Indian name for the Schuylkill was "Manaiung," meaning "where we drink." This is significant, indicating that at that time the Schuylkill water was fit to drink.

Whitemarsh was originally called "Wide-marsh." In a petition of the inhabitants of Skippack and several adjacent plantations to the Court of Quarter Sessions in June 1713, for a road, they state that it "may be laid out from the upper end of the Township, down the wide marsh at Farmer's Mill."<sup>1</sup> The old mill known as "Mather's Mill" in the village of Whitemarsh, Montgomery County, stands on the site of the original Farmer's mill.

A German pronunciation of "Wide-marsh" probably was "Vite-marsh." An Englishman's translation of the German's pronunciation would be "White-marsh." This is supposed to have been the derivation of the name, Whitemarsh.

Tradition says that the Ridge Road was originally an Indian trail, and by the way it wanders around and twists and turns, up hill and down, it isn't difficult to believe that it was one. "Germantown Avenue was originally an Indian trail, leading from Philadelphia to Swedes Ford (Norristown), thence across the Schuylkill River and on to the Susquehanna at Octorara,"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Charles V. Hagner, "Early History of Falls of Schuylkill."

<sup>2</sup> Quarter Sessions Court Records.

<sup>2</sup> Scharf & Westcott's "History of Philadelphia." Page 148.

and it is very reasonable to believe, by the peculiar course that the Ridge Road takes, that it also was a trail leading to the same place.

On Scull & Heap's map dated 1750 are shown the roads and ferries existing at that time. The Wissahickon Road ran from Ninth and Vine Streets, just as it does now, winding out toward the river, which it meets at Falls of Schuylkill, crossing Wissahickon Creek and climbing the hill at Wissahickon.

The distances given on this map are:

"WISSAHICKON ROAD"

To Garrigue's Ferry<sup>1</sup> .....4 miles

To Robeson's<sup>2</sup> .....6 miles

To Levering's<sup>3</sup> .....7 miles

DISCOVERY OF LIME AT PLYMOUTH:

By a patent dated Jan. 13, 1683, Major Jasper Farmar<sup>4</sup> purchased 5000 acres of land from Wm. Penn in the region now occupied by the Whitmarsh Valley. The Major died before sailing and his widow and eight children sailed and settled on this tract. "His widow was known as 'Madame' Farmar and must have been an energetic woman, for in a letter to Wm. Penn dated Sept. 13, 1686, Chief Justice Nicholas More writes, 'Madame Farmar has found out as good limestone on the Schuylkill as any in the world, and is building with it. She offers to sell ten thousand bushels at six pence the bushel upon her plantation, where are considerable hills and near your manor of Springfield.' Probably the earliest lime from limestone used in Pennsylvania came from her kilns.<sup>5</sup> Prior to this lime had been made from oyster shells. John Holmes in his "True Relation of the Flourishing State of Penna." says:

*"A few years hence, it's known full well,  
Here lime was burnt of oyster shell.  
No limestone in these parts was found,  
But since by searching in the ground  
Great store was seen in a short time,  
On which some now make good stone lime,  
Which in its goodness doth excell  
That which was made of oyster shell."*

<sup>1</sup> At Falls of Schuylkill.

<sup>2</sup> Just below Wissahickon Creek.

<sup>3</sup> Corner Leverington Ave. and the Ridge.

<sup>4</sup> Exemplification Book 1—Page 2.

<sup>5</sup> Theodore W. Bean's "History of Montgomery Co." Page 1138.

THE RIDGE ROAD:

Following the discovery of lime at Plymouth, "The petition of James Fox in behalf of himself and the rest of the inhabitants of Plymouth Township" was read in the Council Room at Philadelphia on the 5th day of ye 2nd month 1687 "requesting a cartway might be laid out to their Township."<sup>1</sup> The Council "ordered that there be no disturbance or molestation to the inhabitants of the Plymouth Township in their finding and laying out a convenient cart road from Philadelphia to their Township."

In the March sessions of Quarter Sessions Court 1706 "The petition and humble request of the inhabitants of Plymouth Township humbly pray the Honorable Bench to grant them a common Cartway or Road to extend from Wissahickon Mills up into Perkioming Creek at Edward Lane's and others. The Court ordered Matthew Holgate, Thomas Stroud, Johannes Custis, John Redwitcher, Wm. Harmon and John Jacob to lay out the same agreeable to the prayer of the Petitioners."<sup>2</sup>

In the same year, pursuant to this order, Thomas Fairman, the Surveyor, certified to the Court that he had laid out such a road, describing in detail the directions and distances.<sup>3</sup>

"Wissahickon Mill" stood on the southern side of Wissahickon Creek, a short distance above the mouth and was owned by Andrew Robeson, one of the early pioneers. Edward Lane lived at this time at Collegeville and kept the first hotel where now stands the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel, built in 1701. It still stands a venerable and picturesque old inn.

"Where the Perkiomen Bridge now crosses the creek, was known as 'Philip's Ford.'

"On Feb. 21, 1797, the Legislature passed 'an Act for raising, by way of lottery, the sum of \$20,000. to be applied to the erection of a stone arched bridge on the Perkiomen on the road leading from Philadelphia to Reading.' The contract for the work was given in 1798. At the end of the year the County had spent \$34,683.12 and the bridge was only one-half completed. The bridge was finished in 1799 in

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 1, page 24.

<sup>2</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 27.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 27.



the style it now stands and cost \$60,000."

Was ever anything built within the estimated cost?

This bridge stands today a monument to those who built it and of design and workmanship worthy of being followed by present-day architects and engineers.

In the June Session of 1706 "upon Petition of several of the inhabitants of Merion, Radnor, Plymouth and Roxborough setting forth that there was formerly laid out and surveyed by order of the Court directed to Thomas Fairman, the Surveyor, a certain road leading from Wissahickon Mill land and the City of Philadelphia—yet remained unconfirmed—and that the said Road ever since has been and now is the Usual Road from the several Townships above named to the City of Philadelphia and pray that this Court be pleased to order and appoint Thomas Fairman to resurvey the said Road and to make return thereof at the next session here to be held, in order to be confirmed."<sup>1</sup>

The Court complied with the request and in the June Session 1707 Thomas Fairman reported that he "had laid out a certain road from Philadelphia, through the Northern Liberties to the Mill at Wissahickon, beginning at Sassafras Street<sup>2</sup> where the Sixth Street intersects," describing in detail the directions and distances.<sup>3</sup>

In 1709 a petition signed by John Henry Sprogel, Morris Jones and others recites that they had "plantations lying very remote in the country and on the edge or outskirts of any inhabitants of the country and no public road, they therefore pray for a road from the late house of Edward Lane, deceased, being in the Queens Highway, with Maunitauna etc." The Court complied with the request and the Ridge Road was extended to Manatawny, now Pottstown.

The Ridge Road through Roxborough at present, from Wissahickon to the County Line, follows almost identically the lines laid out in 1706, with the exception of that part from the foot of the hill at Wissahickon to the top at Hermit Lane.

It must have had a terrible time climbing this hill as originally laid out. From the present lay of the land it seems impossible. It may be easily imagined that the original line followed a trail. It mounded the hill abruptly by the shortest distance and not by the least resistance. Starting at the foot of the hill it climbed almost directly to the point where Wissahickon Station now stands, then continued directly to the location of the Wissahickon Library, then swinging eastwardly to Righter Street, followed approximately the lines of that street to Hermit Lane.

#### CHANGES IN THE RIDGE ROAD AT WISSAHICKON:

It continued along this line until 1723, when "Divers of the Inhabitants of the Township of Roxborough representing to the Court that the Great Road from the City of Philadelphia through Roxborough to Manatawny (as it runs over a great Hill and through a deep hollow) is rendered very incommodius to all Travellers by reason of the rains washing the same and by their Petition requesting that the same may be viewed and rectified as may be most convenient to the Public."<sup>1</sup>

The Court appointed Anthony Morris, Rowland Ellis, John Barte, William Palmer, Thomas Shute and Andrew Robeson to view and report. The jury reported that "we have made such alterations as we judge most convenient in that Part of Manatawny Road . . . Beginning about eighteen Perches west of the *Ford by Andrew Robeson's Mill*."<sup>2</sup> (The point where the lower Ridge now crosses the Wissahickon Creek.)

According to the directions and distances given and to subsequent events, the change was not to much advantage. In fact from the present lay of the land, from the foot of the hill to the crest, along which the Reading Railroad runs, it would seem that it was worse, arriving at the crest at the foot of the present Rochelle Avenue, then continuing to the intersection of Sumac and Righter Streets, and following the lines of Righter Street to Hermit Lane.

However, like all true inhabitants of Roxborough, the people endured this course, until

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 31.

<sup>2</sup> Race Street.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 32.

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 107.

<sup>2</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 105.

at the September session of Quarter Sessions Court in 1753, a petition of "divers of the inhabitants of Roxborough, Whitemarsh and Plymouth" was read showing "that your Petitioners labour under great inconvenience from the badness of part of the Wissahickon Road, Beginning at the Top of Robinson's Hill and leading through the land of Michael and Peter Righter to the foot of said Hill."<sup>1</sup> The route proposed at this time followed the base of the hill along Wissahickon Creek until it reached the stone steps at Freeland Avenue, then climbed the impossible hill to Rochelle Avenue, continuing to the intersection of Righter and Lauriston Streets. Some parts of this course were better than the old but that part at the place where the Freeland Avenue steps are now, was worse. At the December Sessions a petition was read advising against this alteration, stating "that your Petitioners conceive the old Road better, nearer and less injurious. Therefore pray to have the same reviewed in order that this Road returned may be disannuled and the old Road continue."<sup>2</sup>

The men appointed reported that they had reviewed the new road "and upon mature consideration we think the Road formerly laid out is and may be kept in good and passable repairs, therefore we judge there is no necessity for the alterations as proposed in as much as the said proposed new Road, in our opinion, is liable with use to be as bad and worse than the other and also crooked and farther about, therefore by no means necessary."<sup>3</sup>

So the old road continued until June, 1786, when "three petitions by the inhabitants of Roxborough Township were read being all of the same tenor, setting forth—That the Road leading from Philadelphia Northwestward through Reading to Northumberland County is one of the Great Highways of the State, through which the produce of the back counties is brought to the City, that in its present passage through the Township of Roxborough it passes over a very steep rocky hill called Van Deren Hill, which is near or about three quarters of a mile in its Ascent, which renders carting and trav-

elling very difficult, that the said Hill may be avoided by taking the road round the side of the same, whereby the Ascent will be gradual without materially increasing the distance,—Pray that the old Road may be vacated in the place aforesaid and the new road may be laid out and established."<sup>1</sup>

The Court ordered John Barry, Wm. McPherson, Jacob Hiltzheimer, Robert Morris, Joseph Bakestraw and Isaac Worrall to view and report. These three petitions had the desired effect and the road up the long hill was laid out along the present lines, with the exception of the recent alterations, although no report of this jury is on record.

However, evidence of it having been changed is found in the minutes of the March Term in 1797 when Nathan Levering and Algernon Roberts, Guardians of Esther Righter of Roxborough Township submitted a petition showing "that a new public road having lately been laid out extending from Robeson's Mill to the Summit of Vanderens or Roxborough Hill on the Wissahickon Road and the same having been reported as complete and fit for use and as this road entirely supersedes the necessity of the old which remains open and at particular seasons is used to the great injury of said Esther Righter's Estate over which both of the said roads pass. Your Petitioners therefore pray that such part of said Old Road as passes through and along the lands of said Esther Righter may be vacated."<sup>2</sup>

The Court appointed Peter Robinson, Andrew Wood, Godfrey Bockius, Joseph Crawford, George Sinn and Christopher Ozias on the jury, who in December of this year reported that they had vacated the old road.<sup>3</sup> The directions and distances given of the vacated road, coincide with the one established in 1723, before described.

When the Norristown Branch of the Reading Railroad was opened to Manayunk in 1834, a dangerous grade crossing was created at Wissahickon Station, where the Ridge Road crossed the Railroad. There has been much agitation in

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 189.

<sup>2</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 191.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 195.

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 4, page 177.

<sup>2</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 5, page 23.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 5, page 36.



recent years to circumvent this danger, and in the Fall of 1926 operations were actually started to accomplish this. This work has just been completed, so that now, after climbing the short steep hill, still known as Robinson's Hill, from the lower Ridge up to Wissahickon Station, it turns westward paralleling the railroad on a steep grade, to the bridge across the railroad and continuing until it meets the Old Ridge Road again at Osborn Street.

From the foot of the hill below Wissahickon Station to the point where the Ridge Road crosses Hermit Lane, the distance is thirty-five hundred feet or two-thirds of a mile. In this distance the road rises 200 feet, making an average grade of 5.7 per cent. Over some parts the grade is 7.5 per cent. Engineers can appreciate what these grades mean on paper. Strangers groan when they have to climb them. Old residents keep quiet—they are used to them.

From the top of the long hill at Hermit Lane, for a distance of three and a half miles, it rises gradually 191 feet to a level of 430 feet above sea level. This point is at the top of the hill just before the road dips down to Manatawna Avenue. It is supposed by many to be the highest point in Philadelphia, but Roxborough cannot claim this distinction, as there is a point in Chestnut Hill ten feet higher.

The Ridge Road has gone by many names. In a deal between Matthew Houlgate, one of the early pioneers, and his son, Matthew, Jr., in 1720, it is called the "Great Road that leads from Plymouth to Philadelphia." In another between John Wood and John Houlgate, 1754, it is called the "King's Road leading to Philadelphia." In one between Bartle Righter and George Righter, 1763, it is called the "King's Highway." In another between Richard Baker and Joseph Starn, 1765, it is referred to as the "Plymouth Road." In a deed between John Potts and Edward Milner, 1770, it is called the "Wissahickon Road," and in one between John Gorgas and John Gorgas, Jr., 1773, it is called the "Manatawny or Great Road." In an agreement between Michael Righter's sons in 1783, it is called the "Reading Road." In a deal between John Righter and John Kennedy in 1802, it is

called the "Great Road leading from Philadelphia to Reading."

On March 30th, 1811, an act was passed empowering "The Ridge Turnpike Company" to build an artificial road—beginning at the intersection of 9th and Vine Streets, Philadelphia, and thence to Perkiomen Bridge. From this time on it became known as the "Ridge Turnpike" and later developed into the Ridge Road.

#### DUKE DE LA ROCHEFOUCAULT LIANCOURT:

As beautiful as this section of the country is at present, it must have been a great deal more so in the old days before railroads, factories, bridges, etc., marred the landscape. This is testified to by the Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt, a French nobleman, who in 1795 made a journey throughout a great part of North America. He was a keen observer and recorded in lengthy detail all that he observed. Fortunately his travels led him through Roxborough to Norristown, and on to Reading, so we are given a very good description of this part of the country as it was in those old days.

"On the 20th of April 1795," says he, "Mr. Guillemard, Caleb Lownes and myself, set out on horseback from Philadelphia through Ridge Road on our way to Norristown. This road, like all the public roads in Pennsylvania is very bad, for provision is brought to that city from all parts in large and heavy laden wagons. The constant passage of these wagons destroys the roads, especially near the town, where several of them meet. Ridge Road is almost impassable . . .

"William Penn promised to every settler, who should purchase 5000 acres of land in the country, 100 acres within the city district and two town shares; a promise that was faithfully kept . . .

"Land in this neighborhood is worth about \$80. an acre. Three years ago it was worth only \$42. . . .

"Two miles from the city, Ridge Road intersects the entrenchments which the English constructed during the last war for the purpose of covering Philadelphia after they had penetrated into Pennsylvania through the Chesapeake. The remains of their work is still visible, but the

presence of the English is still more strongly testified to by the ruins of many half burnt and half demolished houses . . .

"As the country on this side of Philadelphia possesses more variety than on any other, it is here we discover the most agreeable prospects, some of which are truly charming, the more so, the nearer we approach the Schuylkill.

"The contrast between the rocks, which form the banks of the river, and the numerous meadows and adjacent corn fields gives this prospect a mixture of romantic wildness and cultivated beauty which is really delightful.

"The road we have entered does not join the Schuylkill, except near the falls. This name has been improperly given to a slight inequality in the level of the stream, produced by pieces of rock of unequal size in the bed of the river, which, as they accelerate the motion of the water with a certain noise, obstruct, no doubt the navigation, yet so far are they from forming any considerable waterfall that they are entirely covered at high water . . ." <sup>1</sup>

Charles V. Hagner gives a much more delightful description of the falls than this: Speaking of the rocks which the Duke calls "pieces of rock of unequal size" Mr. Hagner says, "This long rock I remember well, and have often, when a boy, fished from it. It extended from the foot of the hill to about two-thirds the distance across the river, forming a complete natural dam, a part of it overhanging on the lower side. In high freshets the water flowed over it and made a beautiful cascade; the other times it forced the river into a narrow channel on the western side, through which it ran with great rapidity and much noise, falling some five or six feet in a distance of about a hundred and fifty yards, and could be heard at a distance of from one to five miles, according to the state of the river and the wind." <sup>2</sup>

"When the tide was out, the roaring of the turbulent waters, precipitated over the continuous and rugged chain of rocks, extending from shore to shore, was heard on still evenings many miles over the surrounding country and was

often borne on the wings of the wind with distinctness to the city, a measured distance of five miles." <sup>1</sup>

The Duke must have seen the Falls at high tide, when the water above and below was at almost the same level. He then describes in detail the mills at the Falls of Schuylkill belonging to Mr. Nicholson and further on the Mill and farm of Andrew Robeson, whom he improperly calls "Robertson" at the mouth of the Wissahickon . . . "About 1/2 mile from Mr. Nicholson's building on the banks of the Schuylkill is the house of one Robertson where we intended to stop.

"Robertson is a quaker and brother of Caleb Lownes' wife, is a miller and farmer on his own account . . . Robertson is but little superior to the servant who conducts his business, he is filled with prejudice and is even ignorant of many things, he appears however to be much more skillful as a miller.

"A person in affluent circumstances pays 1 or 2 shillings towards the repair of the high roads. Poor rates are quite unknown as there are seldom any poor in the country . . . and this is 6 miles from Philadelphia—Surely this must be a happy country . . .

"From Roxborough we proceeded to Spring Mill. After having left the banks of the Schuylkill, we travelled through a tract of country intersected by a regularly alternate succession of hills and valleys . . . The farms are very close to one another; all the land is cultivated. As we proceed the country becomes extremely beautiful . . . The country is covered with neat houses surrounded with painted railings; which indicate prosperity.

"Near Spring Mill we again saw the Schuylkill . . . The prospect up and down the river is extensive and strikingly variegated by great meadows and dark mountains."

At Spring Mill lived Peter Legaux, a Frenchman of scientific fame. Of this man the Duke says, "Spring Mill is the place where is situated the farm . . . of Mr. Legaux. His farm has been sold on account of his inability to pay the second

<sup>1</sup> Duke de la Rochefoucault Liancourt. "Travels Through the United States 1795." Vol. 1, page 2.

<sup>2</sup> Charles V. Hagner, "Early History of the Falls of Schuylkill."

<sup>1</sup> History of the "Schuylkill Fishing Company of the State in Schuylkill." Page 29.



installment of the purchase money. He now actually rents fifteen acres which he has converted into a vineyard."

Peter Legaux lived on the hill to the north of the railroad station in a substantial two-story stone house which is still standing. It is quite a pretentious house and has a wonderful prospect down the river. At Spring Mill also lived Col. Samuel Miles of Revolutionary fame, and in 1790, Mayor of Philadelphia, having lived at Spring Mills from 1774 until 1792, when he moved to Cheltenham Township. At Spring Mill is also an old grist mill, built in 1715, near the mouth of the creek which is fed by the famous springs. These springs and this ancient mill give the locality its name.

The Duke continues, "We left the Schuylkill by Spring Mill to strike to the shortest road to Norristown . . . On the road from Roxborough to Norristown we had now and then a view of the river and at times also a more distant range of small hills, rising in the form of an amphitheatre: This is a branch of the Valley Hills which form a part of the Blue Mountains.

" . . . The roads are very bad and no attempts are made to repair them; we cannot therefore be surprised at hearing that so many stage coaches are overturned . . ."

Speaking of the Schuylkill, he says, "Along its whole course its banks are delightful, and all the land, through which it passes is good. I do not know a finer river in point of water and views. If European taste and magnificence adorned the banks of the Schuylkill with country seats, it would not be excelled either by the Seine or the Thames."

But for the railroad along the river's edge, the dams and a few boathouses, the west side of the river from Flat Rock Dam to Conshohocken presents much the same rugged and picturesque appearance today, as it did in the days of the Duke.

Sherman Day, in his "Historical Collections of Pennsylvania," says: "Few valleys of any country can boast of more picturesque scenery than that of the Schuylkill."

Horatio Gates Jones, in his "Historic Notes of Olden Time" says: "The roads used to be

lined for miles with wagons loaded with wheat, rye or corn on their way to the mills. An eye witness has told me that he has seen a train of wagons at Robeson's Mills extending for nearly half a mile along Ridge Road.

"The scene as described by those who remember the days of yore, was full of excitement and the otherwise quiet Township of Roxborough was on such occasions enlivened by crowds of farmers and teamsters, who were always ready for fun and jokes. Those jocund merry times of old have long since passed away, and no more will those scenes be enacted here."

#### STAGE COACH DAYS:

Among the most interesting and romantic narratives in History may be found stories of the famous old stage coach days. Who is not familiar with and has not read over again with great delight the story of the Dover Mail as it lumbered up Shooter's Hill in "A Tale of Two Cities", or Tom Brown's ride to Rugby in "Tom Brown's School Days"? The old Ridge Road, like other great roads travelled by the Stage, has its tales to tell also.

The "Gentlemen's Pocket Almanac" published in 1769 gives the distance from Philadelphia to Pottstown over the Reading Road as follows:—"To Robin Hood 4 m.; to Plymouth Meeting 14 m.; to Bartlestalls 18; to Perkiomen Church 24; to Schrock's 26; to Widow Lloyds 30; to Potts 38 miles."

About 1781 William Coleman established a stage line from Philadelphia to Reading and drove it himself for 27 years. He started from the White Swan on Race Street every Wednesday morning at 7 o'clock, making a trip every week. In 1804 he received the contract for carrying the mail and started from the Widow Wood's Inn, Reading, every Monday and Thursday morning, returning from Philadelphia every Wednesday and Saturday. This line passed through Norristown, Trappe and Pottsgrove, (since called Pottstown). This arrangement existed from May 1st to November 1st. In the winter season he left the White Swan every Tuesday and Friday at 2 A.M. From Reading this line was continued to Harrisburg.

In 1811 he put on an additional line from

Pottstown to Philadelphia, leaving John Boyer's tavern every Tuesday morning at 6 o'clock and returning from the White Swan every Thursday morning at the same hour, the fare being \$2.25. This is the last account given of William Coleman after staging of thirty years. In this last venture he announces in both English and German that "A sober and careful driver will attend the stage, so that passengers may travel in safety and pleasure."

A stage also passed through Norristown in 1802 for Pottsgrove, starting from "Hays Inn" Philadelphia every Wednesday at sunrise."<sup>1</sup>

"In 1829 John Coleman started a daily mail stage between Philadelphia and Pottsville. So great was the traffic after it started that three wagons were required to convey the passengers and in 1830 there were three stage lines competing for the traffic—the "Clover", "the Reside" and the "Coleman". The time for leaving Pottsville was 2 A.M. and the time of arrival in Philadelphia was 8 P.M. the same day."

I. Daniel Rupp, a historian of Pennsylvania, records that "two daily lines of stages run from Philadelphia to Pottsville—Reside against Coleman—and they merit a eulogium for the vigor with which they crack their whips, the matchless fury of their driving and their exquisite skill in upsetting."<sup>2</sup>

In 1831 we learn that the stage for Reading and Pottsville still left its old place the White Swan at 2 and 4 A.M.

"On Sunday, December 6, 1828, a daring robbery was perpetrated in the Reading Mail Coach. The coach left the city at half past two in the morning with nine passengers and was stopped on the Ridge Road about Turners Lane (a short distance beyond Girard College), by three men, one of whom ran out from the side of the road, grasped the lead horse, and turned him around to one side; two men then stepped up, one on each side of the road, opposite the driver's box, presented a pistol at the latter and ordered him to stop. The lamps were struck with the pistols and the lights put out. The robbers then coolly commenced their operations.

A person who was riding on the seat with the driver was ordered down and his money demanded, after which his hands were tied behind his back by the robbers. The coach was opened and the passengers ordered out and each one required to hand over his money and valuables. One of the villains then jumped into the coach, took the valises, saddle-bags and what they could find and threw them into the road, carried off the mail bags from the driver's seat and threw them into the road also and cut open the mail bags at once. The passengers after having been robbed, were ordered back into the stage, the driver to his seat and the robbers made their escape in the darkness.

"The driver, well frightened, did not attempt to continue the journey, but drove back to the city. Three men were arrested for this crime. One turned States evidence. The other two were convicted and sentenced to be hung. For some reason President Jackson approved the sentence of one, but did not confirm that against the other. The former was hung, the latter served a long term of imprisonment and the one that turned States evidence escaped punishment altogether."<sup>1</sup>

"In 1808 Hezekiah Jeffries established a line from Philadelphia to Norristown—the fare was a dollar allowing 14 lbs. baggage; way passengers 6c a mile. 150 lbs. baggage being rated the same as a passage. This line changed hands from time to time until 1829 when it came into the hands of John Crawford & Company who announced that it started from Levi Roberts Rising Sun Hotel every morning at seven and a half o'clock and passed through Yerkes, Freas Store, Barren Hill, Hagey's,<sup>2</sup> Falls and Robin Hood, leaving John Hunter's Hotel, Sign of the Wagon, on Race Street above 4th. Fare reduced to seventy-five cents."<sup>3</sup>

"It was customary along the route", says one chronicler, "for the stage driver, when within a mile of the place at which the stage usually stopped for breakfast, to blow a horn, the sweet and mellow tones of which would announce his

<sup>1</sup> William J. Buck's "History of Montgomery Co."

<sup>2</sup> "Old Towpaths," by Alvin F. Harlow.

<sup>1</sup> Scharf & Westcott's "History of Philadelphia." Page 623.

<sup>2</sup> John Hagey's "Sign of the Green Tree"—Ridge Road and Port Royal Avenue, Roxborough.

<sup>3</sup> Theodore W. Bean's "History of Montgomery County." Page 131.



coming. No sooner there than he would drop his lines, aid the passengers out of the coach and proceed to the awaiting meal; in the meantime the horses would be changed, after the meal the seats would be again occupied and the journey resumed.

"In some cases fifteen miles having been made on the rugged roads, it may be well supposed that an appetite would be keen. At every post office, generally about four or five miles apart, a brief stop would be made to have the mail changed and the horses watered. They were what was generally termed Troy coaches, painted red with a profusion of gilding, having the proprietors' names blazoned on the panels. Four horses were always driven to each coach. The horses were generally selected for beauty, speed and powers of endurance, in the proper care of which the hostlers appeared to take great delight.

"The arrival and departure of the mail coaches was for many years considered one of the sights. The mail coaches had the distinction of carrying the latest news. As they pulled out, the hatches were banged down over the sacks, the guard blew his horn and away they went amid the cheers of the onlookers."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas B. Hahn in his "Reminiscences of Norristown about 1816"<sup>2</sup> thus describes one of its stages. "There were few such public conveyances, but among the few was a line of stages from Norristown to Philadelphia, and I remember well how they looked. On the side of the vehicle, which resembled a Mississippi flat boat, was inscribed in larger letters the name of the proprietor. It left every morning for the City at 7 o'clock, and its departure and arrival were great events. It was open in front and drawn by four horses, and that important character, the driver, was furnished with a long tin horn and sometimes with another kind of horn, that would occasion him to blow an extra and sufficient blast that it might be known that the great mail stage was about to leave for town."

"But their day is over", bemoaned an old English coachman. "Them," says he with pathos,

"them as 'ave seen coaches afore rails came into fashion 'ave seen something worth remembering. Them was 'appy days, afore reform and rails turned everything upside down, and men rode, as nature intended they should, on pikes with coaches and smart active cattle and not by machinery like bags of cotton and hardware. But coaches is done forever and a heavy blow it is! They was the pride of the country; there wasn't anything like them to be found nowhere nor never will again."<sup>1</sup>

Chas. V. Hagner says:—"Jacob Shuster ran a stage from Roxborough to Philadelphia, from the Ship Taxern<sup>2</sup> near the nine milestone (Cor. of Port Royal Ave. and the Ridge). Shuster was persuaded by Mr. Hagner and others for a subsidy of \$65.00 to change his course and run it down Green Lane and through Manayunk for a three months' trial. He found this course so profitable that he had to get more horses and stages and before the three months were up John Crawford set up a line in opposition to his. Crawford ran his line up the Ridge from Wissahickon Station until the Manayunk and Roxborough Incline Plane Railway laid tracks and started horse cars early in the 70's."<sup>3</sup>

Many are the stories told of old John Crawford. Probably the following is the most typical:—His coach was entered by a rear door. He controlled the door from his seat in the front by a strap which was fastened to the door and connected to an arrangement which he operated with his foot. If one was not a regular rider and attempted to enter the coach in bad weather, old John would clap his foot on the arrangement that held the door shut and grumble "No! You don't ride in good weather. Damn you walk!"

Another story, probably just as typical, is that of a gentleman who wanted to ride on the box seat at the side of Mr. Crawford but had constantly been refused. One day as the coach stopped at the Leverington Hotel for Mr. Crawford to quench his thirst, the gentleman in question followed him in and paid the bill be-

<sup>1</sup> Theodore Bean's "History of Montgomery County." Page 130.

<sup>2</sup> Theodore Bean's "History of Montgomery County." Page 761.

<sup>1</sup> "Coaching Days and Coaching Ways," by W. Outram Tristram.

<sup>2</sup> Formerly the "Sign of the Green Tree."

<sup>3</sup> Charles V. Hagner's "Early History of Falls of Schuylkill."

fore Mr. Crawford had time to get the change from his pocket. After that the gentleman in question was always seen riding on the box seat.

The boys were the bane of his existence. Many a ride did they try to steal on the rear step of the coach, but the old man's eye was so keen and so deft was he with his whip that not many rides were stolen.

Crawford had a driver who was not quite as scrupulous as he might have been. The story is told that this driver, at the end of a day's run, while counting the receipts in the barn, was seen to put the money all in one pile; selecting

#### THE ROADSIDE INNS:

An element of interest that grew up hand in hand with the stage coach was the roadside inn, an institution famous in its day and interesting as the tales of the coaches themselves. They provided welcome, warmth and shelter for all who happened along. The genial inn-keeper made no distinction between high and low, rich and poor.

It is at the comfortable hostelry, that each, for a time, throws aside his calling and jostles with his neighbor as a wayfarer.

Inns have never been renowned for stiff-neckedness. It has ever been their pride to hold out welcoming arms to all who can pay their way, whatever their character or creed. Common ground for all was the wayside inn.

The names of the inns were on gaudily painted signs which swung from high posts. When the wind blew they moaned and creaked dolefully, especially on



*The Sorrel Horse Inn*

three coins of the same denomination he would place two in one pile and one in another, saying after each operation, "Two for Crawford, one for me. Two for Crawford, one for me," repeating the operation until the original pile was exhausted.

John Small drove a stage coach to the City from Manayunk until the advent of the Ridge Avenue horse cars, which began running to Manayunk from Ridge and Columbia Avenues in 1859, after which he ran his stage up the Ridge from Wissahickon to Roxborough. In climbing the long hill at Wissahickon, when half way up, he would stop his horses and say "Gentlemen, won't you please get out and walk."

a cold winter's day. On these signs we find such fantastic names as "The Plow", "Buttonball Inn", "The Sorrel Horse", "The Ship Tavern". On others we find the names of famous men such as "Washington Inn" and "The Lafayette", while others were named after their proprietors as "Wunder's Inn" and "Levering's Inn". All of these stood along the Ridge within the limits of Roxborough Township. Below Roxborough were the "Robin Hood" and "The Dove and Swan", and above were "The Black Horse" and "Seven Stars", but the eighteenth amendment sounded the death-knell to all of them and those that have not already passed, will, like the old stages have soon passed into history.



#### CONDITION OF THE EARLY ROADS:

The condition of the roads in the old days was a matter of great concern. In 1712 we find an ordinance introduced in Common Council intended to regulate the method of hauling by Carters and Wagoners, prescribing the number of horses to be used and the width of the wheel tires. It was found, "Impractical to haul half a cord of wood with 2 Horses in ye Winter Time, and therefore think it proper to allow the Carters to haul wood with 3 Horses, provided they do not carry more than half a cord".

In 1789 a two horse coach ran between Reading and Philadelphia, taking two days to make the trip. The "American Register" in 1797 says: "The roads are in a fearful condition. Coaches overturned, passengers killed and horses destroyed by overwork put upon them. In winter sometimes no stage sets out for two weeks."

Some of the roads were so rough and rocky, that of one of them it was said a man drove three miles over it before he discovered that he had lost one of his hind wheels.

Isaac Weld in his Travels in 1795, says: "The driver frequently had to call to the passengers in the stage to lean out of the carriage, first on one side, then on the other, to prevent it from overturning in the deep ruts, with which the road abounds. 'Now, gentlemen, to the right!' Upon which the passengers all stretched their bodies half out of the carriage to balance on that side. 'Now, gentlemen, to the left!' and so on."

The roads immediately around the city were in very bad condition. The Germantown road in 1801 was pronounced by the Philadelphia Gazette to be "the worst in the United States." There were numerous accidents upon it by the stoppage of wagons, spraining of horses, breaking of wheels and axles and other injuries occasioned by the deep mud. This condition of the road forced the Germantown people to go to the City either by way of Frankford, or to make their way "across country" pulling down fences and invading the property of owners of land adjoining the road.

In 1798 an Act was passed to incorporate a company to build a turnpike from Philadelphia

to Germantown and thence to Reading. On February 12, 1802, the Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike Company was incorporated. The road was to begin at 3rd and Vine Streets.

#### THE RIDGE TURNPIKE:

In 1803 petitions for a Turnpike along the Ridge or Wissahickon road were refused "because the Germantown Turnpike was parallel and only a mile and a half distant."

On March 30, 1811, an Act of incorporation was signed by Governor Simon Snyder, by which Gen. Francis Swain, James Sharswood, Henry Nixon, Joseph Starne, Matthias Harrison, Francis Deal, John H. Duy, John Marclay, Alexander Crawford, Nathan Levering, Jr., and Levi Pawling were appointed commissioners to receive subscriptions for the organization of a company "for making an artificial road, beginning at the intersection of 10th and Vine Streets, Philadelphia and thence to Perkiomen Bridge." The corporation to be entitled "The Ridge Turnpike Company." The capital stock was divided into fifteen hundred shares at fifty dollars each. The route, it declared, should be "As near as may be consistent with economy and utility; along, over and upon the bed of the present road leading from the intersection of Vine and Tenth Streets, in the City of Philadelphia; to Wissahickon Creek thence to Norristown, in the County of Montgomery, and thence by the nearest and best route to Perkiomen Bridge, in the county aforesaid."

In 1873 the City of Philadelphia purchased that part of the turnpike which ran through Roxborough from the Wissahickon Creek to the County Line; having previously purchased that part below Wissahickon Creek, thus abolishing the toll gates. The petition for this purchase was signed by James Holgate, Anthony Tartar, John Crawford, John Marks, Ephraim Rex, Joseph Layer, Reuben Layer, Wm. F. Steele, John H. Harned, Valentine Keely, C. W. Goshen, George T. Righter, George Doyle and Thomas Armitage. The road was appraised at \$52,724.16 and Major Charles Thomson Jones, at that time, was president.

#### THE MILESTONES:

Of the milestones along the road Mr. Fred

Perry Powers in his "Milestones and Highways" says: "I have searched the laws of the Province, the journals of Assembly, the minutes of the Council, and considerable other literature without finding a single allusion to mile-

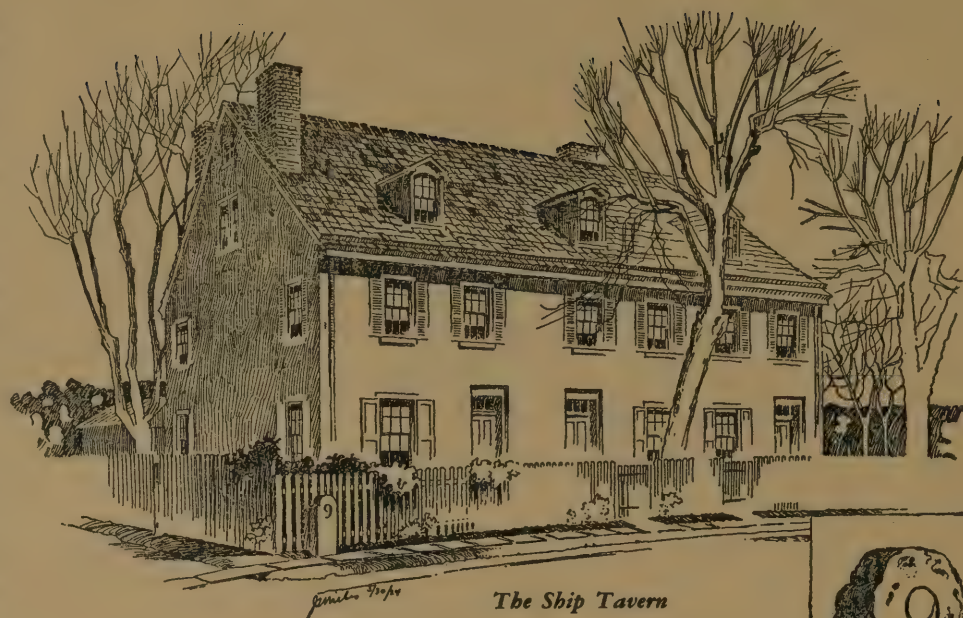
stones. The charters of the turnpike companies require the erection of milestones without the allusion to the fact that on most of these roads milestones were then standing. William J. Buck, in his history of Montgomery County, confessed his inability to find any law or ordinance on the subject. The fact that they were erected on the roads by private enterprise . . . incline me to believe that all the stones around Philadelphia, before the turnpike companies, were set up by public spirited citizens. The earliest action taken by the New York Assembly, the act of 1774, was merely for the preservation of milestones, a fine of three pounds sterling on a freeman, or thirty nine lashes on a slave, being the penalty for defacement . . ."

In a letter dated October 1, 1777 to General Washington, Colonel Moylan speaks of the Hessians collecting grain from every farm as far as the eighth milestone (on the Ridge Road).

"The dairy of Jacob Hiltzheimer for 1768 records Aug. 12—Went up the Wissahickon Road to set up milestones. Dined at Libarions with Hugh Roberts, Pearson Smith, Edward Milner, John Lukens, Surveyor and . . . Chambers, stone cutter. Then went up to Christopher Robins and a little beyond his house set up the XIII milestone."<sup>1</sup>

Five of the milestones stood in Roxborough

<sup>1</sup> Fred Perry Powers' "Milestones and Highways." Philadelphia History, Vol. 2, No. 6, page 129.



*The Ship Tavern*



*The Milestone.*

along the Ridge: The sixth to the tenth inclusive. The sixth stood just above Hermit Lane; the seventh at Hermitage Street. These were removed within recent years. The eighth still stands just above Domino Lane, the ninth at Port Royal Avenue (Ship Lane) and the tenth at County Line.

#### THE HORSE CAR LINE:

In 1872 a new era of travelling dawned in Roxborough. A horsecar line was to be inaugurated, under the long name of "The Manayunk and Roxborough Incline Plane and Railway Company, familiarly known as the "M. & R. I. P. and R. W." The pronunciation of these letters may seem very clumsy to one not acquainted, but to the old timer they roll off the tongue like French words to a Frenchman.

The original intention was to build an incline plane railroad from Manayunk to Roxborough. It was to start at the foot of Gay Street and run to the top of the cliff at the head of the street. The location was later changed to run up Levering Street.

On October 26, stock was advertised for and by November 23rd, \$10,450.00 had been subscribed for.

On Jan. 3, 1873, the following editorial appeared in the "Chronicle and Advertiser":—"The agitation of the Roxborough Railroad question, in one form or another will probably



lead to practical results at no distant day. The fight appears to be between an Incline Road from Manayunk to Roxborough, via Levering Street, or some point near it and a horse car track starting at Wissahickon and continuing up the Ridge.

"No project that does not embrace both features named should receive any countenance from our capitalists or citizens generally."

On April 10, Governor Hartranft signed the bill of incorporation and a meeting of the incorporators was held in the parlor of the Rev. P. S. Talmage, Lyceum Avenue.

The incorporators were P. Stryker Talmage, Wm. Ring, A. Elwood Jones, T. Mason Mitchell, Jr., John Dolman, Cornelius J. McGlinchy, Jas. Bowker, Thomas Shaw, Wm. C. Todd and John Boyd under the "name, style and title" of the "Manayunk and Roxborough Incline Plane Railway Company"—"with power to construct and operate an Incline Plane from any point on Levering Street, Manayunk, to extend to the top of the hill in Roxborough, between Levering and Grape Streets and to lay rails on Levering Street from Cresson Street to Lyceum Avenue.

On April 16, Thomas Shaw, the inventor, had finished a working model of the method of operating the cars on the incline and had applied for a patent.

"Chronicle and Advertiser"—December 20, 1873: "The Centennial will be upon us before we know it . . . Why the Incline itself and the novel principle on which it is likely to be worked will alone prove an immense attraction to those who will have come thousands of miles to learn of the resources and the triumphs of American ingenuity."

On the last day of the year 1873, ground was broken on Levering Street for the building of the incline and that evening a meeting of the stockholders was held in Lyceum Hall. Thomas Shaw was elected President; C. J. McGlinchy, Treasurer; W. H. Lewis, Secretary; and the directors elected were P. S. Talmage, P. K. Boyer, Jas. F. Nicholas, Wm. C. Todd, S. S. Keely, Wm. Ring and Jacob S. Fry.

On June 6th at a meeting of the company,

considerable dissatisfaction arose—388 shares of stock were withdrawn and the Incline abandoned. "The road was \$20,000. better without the 'Incline feature,' and it was decided to concentrate efforts on the horsecar line on the Ridge.

Finally the road was completed and the cars ready to run. The gala day had arrived when Roxborough should shake off the shackles of the old stage coach. The event is best described in true local color as follows:

"Chronicle & Advertiser"—Saturday, November 28, 1874: "Almost on the minute—2 P. M.—the three new cars of the Roxborough and Barren Hill Passenger Railway left the Wissahickon terminus of the 5½ miles of track last Saturday afternoon. It was a stirring sight. Large numbers of both sexes had congregated to see the start, and express their joy at the final completion of the glorious enterprise. The cars themselves were abundantly admired. Nobody seemed able to say enough in praise of the combined elegance and comfort secured in their construction. Light, strong, airy, compact, well ventilated, beautifully painted, furnished and equipped, the most fastidious could only say 'Well done' as the result of their examination. The bodies are of poplar and ash, the seats of walnut and ash, in alternate slats, the blinds of wild cherry, the frames of the sixteen large windows—six on each side and two at each end—are of walnut, and over the windows are neat panels of ash, with French veneering in the centre. The roof is frescoed in brilliant colors. The narrow lights along the edge of the double top are of ground glass, beautifully figured. There are two mirrors at each end, above the windows. The handles of the doors, the triangular rings in the roof-straps, and other metal fixings, are silver or nickel plated, and present a beautiful appearance. There are two lamps to each car, in the centre, near the roof . . .

. . . They are as handsome outside as in, the number of each car being enclosed in fine ornamental scroll work of beautiful colors. Along the top is the inscription: 'Roxborough and Barren Hill,' and along the bottom, over the wheels: M. & R. Incl. Pl. & Ry. Co." In front

is the legend, 'No Smoking,' which we were glad to see.

"Just before the start, the 1.30 train from the city reached Wissahickon, and the scene must have been animating, as viewed from the cars. All the horses of the company, thirteen in number, were on the ground, wearing small flags in their headgear. Mr. George Wagner also stood with a flag unfurled, and the breeze took out every crease and fold as it flapped in view of the passengers. All were now bustle and animation. Mr. Jas. F. Nicholas was appointed generallissimo of the forces, and in his masterly way, went back and forth, giving orders, making arrangements, lending a hand occasionally, till at length the word was given, and the expedition started amid three rousing cheers from spectators and riders.

"The start was made in the following order: In the first car were the members of the Rowbotham Cornet Band who had kindly volunteered their services for the occasion, and added immensely to its attractions with their excellent music. In the second car were the invited guests, including, among others, Messrs. H. G. Jones, Senator-elect from the Fourth district; A. D. Levering, W. J. Donahugh, John H. Levering, engineer of the road; Arnold Highley, Jas. Bramble, Jr., author of the inclined project; Jas. L. Rahn, Darius Keely, John Seifert, Hugh Hallowell, John H. Harmer, Michael Wartman, Amos Stiles, Martin Lush, the editors of the Manayunk papers, and others. In the third car were the officers and directors of the company, as follows: D. O. Hitner, President; Wm. H. Lewis, Secretary; C. J. McGlinchey, Treasurer; Percival K. Boyer, Jas. F. Nicholas, Geo. W. Wagner, S. S. Keely, Wm. Ring, Michael Richter, and J. Vaughan Merrick. Mr. Al. Tibben, the Superintendent of the road, acted in conjunction with Mr. Nicholas, and through their well-directed efforts, the trip each way was a triumphant success.

"What a trip it was! By the side of the cars, dogs, men on horseback and in carriages, all the way from Wissahickon to Barren Hill. It was tough pulling at first for the animals, but they held on bravely, and at Ridge Road and Her-

mit's Lane, the family of Mr. John Adams gave the first salute, waving handkerchiefs and other nondescript linen, and receiving hearty cheers in return. The cars had now reached the level, and the progress was correspondingly rapid. All within the cars were in high state of exhilaration, exchanging mutual congratulations about every second . . . But the faces within were not brighter than the faces which lined the track. From nearly every dwelling, street and avenue the people poured forth, the women in particular, and flags and handkerchiefs were freely waved, and merry words of welcome rang from many tongues. It seemed like a besieged town hailing the advance of a friendly and conquering army.

"At 18 minutes after starting, the cars passed the Leverington Hotel; and in 7 minutes more were in front of Prutzman's. Farther up, in front of Mr. Wagner's coach factory, a large flag was suspended across the street, and the expedition halted to favor the family with a serenade, in honor of Mr. Wagner himself, who rode in front of the director's car, bearing a large flag. And so the thing went on, the old residents coming to the door to see what was to pay, and the 'Senator,'<sup>1</sup> with characteristic bonhomie, rushing to the platform to call each one by name, and giving them a merry greeting . . .

"Another halt and another serenade were had in front of the handsome country-seat of Mr. James F. Nicholas. Mrs. Nicholas and the girls were on the spacious lawn in front, and were the smiling recipients of three hearty cheers, led by a crazy reporter.

"The cars got to Ship Lane 44 minutes past two and were at the depot three minutes later . . .

"So rejoicing, the county line was passed at fifty-five minutes past two, and we entered old Montgomery to gloat over the beautiful sweep of the road past Barren Hill, where the cars stopped amid a welcoming crowd of ladies and gentlemen, exactly at three o'clock.

"How delighted the people were . . . Band, guests and directors disembarked and were re-

<sup>1</sup> Horatio Gates Jones.



ceived with cordial handshakings, while the horses were transferred so as to head towards the city. Gradually the company assembled, by invitation, on the piazza of Mr. Boyer's mansion, at the end of the line, and in a few minutes more they were marshalled into the long and spacious dining room, to behold just such a spread as 'mine host' of the Leverington Hotel gets up once a year for those terrible fellows, the Roxborough Horse Company. The marvel of it was, that Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Hart, who engineered the whole affair, received no orders about it until the previous day; yet there was a well prepared feast for seventy or eighty hungry people, of the very best that the country afforded. Beef, pork, chickens, turkeys, roast, boiled, baked and stewed; preserves, pickles, jellies, sauces; milk and water, tea and coffee; bread, cakes, custards, pies and condiments; nearly everything edible was there, in absolute perfection . . .

"But even such a dinner as that must come to an end; and as two Americans can hardly meet without one of them being appointed chairman, Mr. J. Vaughan Merrick was unanimously assigned that position; after which there were lusty calls for "the Senator." Mr. Jones responded by a general explosion of thankfulness to everybody, winding up with some revolutionary reminiscences connected with the immediate neighborhood, which were intensely interesting . . .

"The downward trip was commenced at 4:20 and was made in a little less than an hour . . . But nothing very particular took place until, at five minutes to five, just above Hays' Lane, one of those fortuitous juxtapositions occurred which are apt to live long in the memory. The fact is, the Roxborough stage had stopped to deliver a passenger, and those remaining in it seemed to realize the incongruity of their position, and fairly shook with laughter. The new cars, brilliant with flags and crowded with passengers went flashing past, and, doubtless, more than one of the company soliloquized: 'Old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new.' . . ."

The following "Ad" appeared in the same paper:

"Roxborough & Barren Hill Passenger Railway."

"Fare—from Wissachickon to Leverington Hotel, one fare (7 cents); to Depot, two fares; to Barren Hill, three fares. Package of four tickets 25 cents."

Theodore W. Bean, in his "History of Montgomery County," published in 1884 says: "A passenger railway was completed from this place (Barren Hill) to Roxborough about ten years ago, over which five or six daily trains are drawn by two horses."

As time went on the fare was reduced to six cents between the points which at first was seven, and five tickets sold for a quarter.

The conductor stood on the back platform with a fare register hung around his neck on a chain. The register was a nickel-plated affair shaped like a shield. Projecting above the upper edge of the shield was a row of keys which, when pushed, registered the fare. In order to prevent the key from being accidentally pushed and ringing a fare, the stem of each key had a hole and a piece of wood like a meat skewer was run through the holes, thus locking the keys together. As a passenger boarded the car, the conductor would pull the skewer out, push a key and ram the skewer back through the holes again. If he had to make change, or take several fares at a time, he would hold the skewer in his mouth or stick it back of his ear. After the skewer had passed through the hands, mouth, ears and hair of several conductors it was ready for a chloride-o'-lime or formaldehyde bath, which it never got.

If there was an obstruction of any kind on the track, it made no difference. The car merely ran off the track, around the obstruction and on to the track again. Quite often two loaded wagons would be on the track coming in opposite directions and when they met there was usually an argument as to which one would turn out. If a car happened along at such a time, and neither driver could be persuaded to give in, the car would run off the track, around the wagons and on the track again.

The cars ran all the year round, winter and

summer; rain or shine, ice or snow. In winter when a light snow or ice covered the tracks a salt car was used. This was a box-like kind of a car, filled with salt and had spouts similar to the sand spouts on modern trolley cars through which the salt ran on to the tracks to melt the snow and ice. When the snow and ice became heavy enough, which it did in those days, sleighs were used instead of cars.

These sleighs were covered with canvas in a manner similar to the old Conestoga wagons, except that the canvas was black. They were fondly called the "Black Marias." The seats ran lengthwise along the sides. Passengers entered at the rear. It was so dark inside, that once a passenger entered, he could neither see nor be seen until he came out again. When they reached the top of the long hill at Wissahickon, on the down trip, the horses were unhitched and the sleigh coasted down to the station at the foot of the hill.

Very accommodating to its patrons was the old horsecar line. The story is told and has been verified by Mr. S. himself, that when he was not at his front gate to catch the 7:30 car in the morning, the conductor would stop the car, knock at the front door and yell "Car waiting S." whereupon Mr. S., who was eating breakfast, would take one more bite of bread and one more swallow of coffee, leisurely put on his hat and coat and saunter out to the car.

Mr. R. says he can go Mr. S. one better. He says when the 7:30 car rounded the bend, about a quarter of a mile above his house, the conductor would blow a shrill whistle, which was the signal for Mr. R. to arise from his slumber, whereupon Mr. R. would jump out of bed, wash and dress himself, eat his breakfast, catch the car and tie his necktie and shoestrings on the way down.

#### THE TROLLEY CARS:

But as all things have their day and then pass on, so it was with the old horsecars. On October 22, 1894, their place was taken by the trolley cars. The event is recorded in the "Chronicle & Advertiser" on Friday, October 26, 1894, as follows: "The official inspection of the line took

place on Monday afternoon, the car leaving Wissahickon at 12:35 with the following gentlemen on board—James Rawle, Henry W. Biddle, Francis Rawle, Henry M. Tracey, T. A. Merryweather, Randolph Clay, James Bramble, George Hager, Benjamin Darlington, Major L. S. Bent, Fletcher Pearson and the following guests: Walter A. Carson, Frank Ramsey, G. Powell Childs, Daniel H. Kirkner, J. C. Padley, James Milligan, Wm. Barnard Bray, Wm. L. Donohue, R. R. Shronk. The following directors of the old line were also on board; Chas. J. Walton, Wm. H. Lewis, C. J. McGlinchey, J. Vaughan Merrick, Wm. Ring, Wm. J. Donohugh, Wm. C. Hamilton, John C. Klauder and Albert Tibben.

"An ineffective drizzle at starting had no appreciable effect on the lightning steed which had been harnessed to the elegant and roomy chariot and there was but a momentary pause as the ubiquitous photographer took a 'counterfeit presentment' of the outfit."

"Away up Robeson's Hill and the Ridge Pike we sped . . . arriving at Barren Hill at 1:24. It was here that the drizzle got in its best licks. The car was well up among the highlands where on sunny days you catch Beulah glimpses till you can't rest.

"On the return the delegation reached Wissahickon in time for the handsome spread which Mr. James Rawle, who seemed a very encyclopedia of trolley lore, had previously arranged for at Warren's restaurant, Sumac Street and Ridge Avenue.

"After the dinner a meeting was held, President Chas. J. Walton presiding, and addresses congratulatory to the new management and reviewing the history of the old line which was opened November 21, 1874 were made by Wm. H. Lewis, J. Vaughan Merrick, James Rawle, Major Bent, Fletcher Pearson, William Ring, C. J. McGlinchey and others . . . Mr. James Rawle reviewed the history of the new management and congratulated the old management for having so many years maintained a railway that was kept running by its receipts, on having issued no bonds and having had no floating indebtedness.





Ridge Avenue and Green Lane in 1924





"Wm. J. Donohugh gave an interesting history of Roxborough from the time he first moved into the 21st ward in 1862, when the old stage run by John Crawford formed the only convenience for people to travel through the borough.

"After the meeting adjourned the party on invitation rode over the Wissahickon Electric Railway from Wissahickon to Manayunk<sup>1</sup> and return . . . Both these lines are destined to grow up with the country . . . Taken in connection with the Ridge Avenue line and the two steam lines, we can get to almost anywhere with the minimum amount of money. If we could only get away from ourselves occasionally!"

For several years the trolley cars were very popular, especially during the summer. Closed cars were run during the winter and open cars in summer. In the summer cars the seats ran crosswise, the full width of the car and the sides of the cars were open, thus permitting all the air and view possible. The seats were reached by a running board along the sides of the car. These cars were very pleasant to ride in on clear summer days. On summer evenings they were "chartered" by Churches and organizations of various kinds for "trolley parties." These parties were profitable both for the companies and the organizations. They ran along at top speed without a stop from one end of the line to the other, filled with boys and girls and men and women, singing and making the welkin ring.

Unfortunately as time went on and traffic grew heavier, the accidents from falling off the running board of the summer cars became so many that they finally had to be done away with and replaced by closed cars.

For several years prior to 1924, the Ridge Road was in such miserable condition as to be

avoided as much as possible. The ruts were so many and so deep that it might have been said of it, as was said of the Germantown Road in 1801—"the worst in the United States."

The car tracks were so uneven that the car heaved and rolled like a ship at sea. It often happened that a car would jump the track and sprawl all over the street; whereupon the conductor and motorman would get out the crow-bars, re-railers and other paraphernalia to jack it on again. The passengers would quietly file out of the car, line up along the curb and patiently watch the operation. As the cars ran as often as fifteen minutes apart, it would sometimes be possible to get the fractious car on to the track again without blocking more than three other cars.

Sometimes this would happen to the last car up at night leaving Wissahickon at 1:00 A.M., in which case the clanking of the crowbars and chains, the shouts of the men and the quiet murmurings of the passengers, would awake the sleeping residents along the road, who would get out of bed and watch the performance from their windows. This performance was carried on by the light of lanterns, which added to the gruesomeness of the scene.

If a passenger boarded a car, like as not he would find himself half way between the track and the curb before arriving at his destination. In the meantime the fare jumped from six cents to eight, and then to nine.

In 1924 a new concrete road was built and new car tracks laid (at least some of them were new) so that now the cars ride on a more even keel, still fifteen minutes apart (weather permitting), and the old Ridge Road has once more become the "Great Road leading from Philadelphia to Reading."

<sup>1</sup> The trolley line from Wissahickon to Manayunk via Manayunk Avenue, Leverington Avenue and Wood Street was started May 19, 1894.

## CHAPTER II

# DURING THE REVOLUTION

At the time of the Revolution, the territory covered by the present Roxborough, Manayunk and Wissahickon was all embraced by Roxborough Township which extended from the Schuylkill River northeastwardly two miles to Wissahickon Avenue and from the County Line southeastwardly five miles to approximately Midvale Avenue.

The Ridge Road meandered along the high ground between the river and the creek, from Wissahickon to the County Line, as it does now, except that from Hermit Lane to Wissahickon

On the west side of the Ridge, Green Lane was the only road from the Ridge to the River between Wissahickon and Lafayette.

At Lafayette was Rees or Edward's Ford and from this Ford in a southerly direction to Port Royal Avenue, zigzagged Hagy's Mill Road as it does now.

Green Lane ran to Levering's Ford which crossed the river a short distance below the Manayunk Bridge.

The Township at that time was very sparsely settled. The population two years later was but

600. Henry Hill's house stood along Midvale Avenue near Wissahickon Avenue. It still stands. Joseph Warner's house stood along School House Lane, as did also those of Benj. and Wm. Morgan.

John Van Daren's house stood along the lower Ridge Road a short distance be-



*Green Lane at Ridge Avenue*

Station it followed approximately the course now taken by Righter Street and Sumac Street.

School Lane ran from Germantown to the lower Ridge as it does now. From the foot of Robinson's Hill at Wissahickon a road called the Ferry Road ran along the river bank to Righters Ferry where Pencoyd Bridge is now.

On the east side of the Ridge, Hermit Lane, Rittenhouse Lane, Roxborough Avenue, Gorgas Lane, Shawmont Avenue, Manatawna Avenue and Township Line Road all ran from the Ridge to the Mills along the Wissahickon, but in slightly different ways and under different names, being named after the owners of the mills at the foot of the lanes and changing names as the mills changed hands.

low Wissahickon Creek. His Grist Mill stood on the south side of the creek about where the railroad crosses it. His mill dam was at the sharp bend in the creek just above the lower Ridge Road. Nicholas Rittenhouse's Grist Mill and house came next along the Wissahickon near the foot of Hermit Lane. Then came Henry Rittenhouse's Mill and house where the Blue Stone bridge is now. Rittenhouse's paper mill and house stood along Paper Mill Run. The next mill along the Wissahickon was Peter Care's paper mill at the foot of Roxborough Avenue. Then came John Gorgas Grist Mill at the foot of Gorgas Lane, then Thomas Livezey's house and Grist Mill at the foot of Shawmont Avenue. Joseph Paul's Grist Mill,



later owned by John Wise, came next, at the foot of Wise's Mill Road, which had not yet been laid out. Where Thomas Mill Road crosses the Creek over the old red bridge, stood John Barges house and Grist Mill, later owned by Daniel Thomas. John Paul's Grist Mill stood at the foot of Thorp's Lane, though that lane had not yet been laid out.

Of these picturesque old mills with their water wheels, forebays and raceways, scarcely one stone is left upon another.

The old Markle House stood on Rittenhouse Lane at the point where that lane branched off the present Walnut Lane to go down to the Wissahickon. Peter Righter's house stood at the east end of his ferry where Pencoyd bridge is now.

About thirty houses were scattered along the Ridge Road. But ten remain today to tell the tale. There was a log cabin along Hermit Lane. Another one stood in the hollow to the east of the Ridge below Shawmont Avenue. A third was at the foot of Parker Avenue and a fourth to the west of the Ridge above Manatawna Avenue. All four remain today, three of them being occupied as comfortable dwellings. At that time there were but two houses in the present Manayunk. One of them stood on the west side of Green Lane just below Silverwood Street. It was Abraham Levering's house, built by his father Jacob in 1736. The other one still stands on the rock above the Reading Railroad at the foot of Washington Street. This house was built by Benjamin Levering about 1770.

Andrew Wood had a shad fishery on an island in the River below the foot of Levering Street. Peter Righter had another down near his ferry.

The men of Roxborough Township were yeomen or freeholders, husbandmen or farmers, cordwainers or shoemakers, skin dressers or tanners and tailors (in the old deeds spelled Taylors). They were millers, fullers and weavers, blacksmiths and saddle tree makers, carpenters, joiners, coopers and inn keepers, but when the call to arms was sounded, they responded.

In the muster rolls of the Pennsylvania Militia are found about 90 names, which have been

identified among the old land deeds as citizens of Roxborough Township.

Mr. Henry Hill,<sup>1</sup> states in a manuscript letter book containing notices of military affairs the following: "Philadelphia, October 3, 1775—I have nothing to do at present but muster and we have got around about Roxborough an active and well disciplined company."<sup>2</sup>

On February 5, 1777, we find the following order from Henry Hill: "This certifies that Mr. Aaron Levering Second Major in my Battalion of Militia who marched with a command of two companies to join General Washington last December was mustered in Captain Houlgate's Company, but not included in the muster master's order on the Paymaster.

"Henry Hill, Col."<sup>3</sup>

In 1776 Aaron Levering was captain of one of the Companies in the Flying Camp<sup>4</sup> and in 1777 we find him Lieutenant Colonel of 2nd Battalion of Philadelphia County Associators for Germantown, Roxbury, Springfield and Bristol Townships.<sup>5</sup>

In 1777 we find Matthew Holeget Captain of a company in the Second Battalion, Philadelphia County Militia and fifty Roxborough men in his company fined for absence on Muster days.<sup>6</sup> In 1778 he is still captain of the same company with fifty-two men fined.<sup>7</sup> In 1779 the same Matthew Houlgate has become Colonel of this Battalion and his brother John has been made captain of his company.<sup>8</sup> In 1780 we find Matthew Holgate Lieutenant Colonel of the Seventh Battalion, Philadelphia County Militia.<sup>9</sup>

"The recruits were drilled by a Mr. Paine, who had once been in the British Army. After several days drilling they were ordered to leave for the front. They marched down the Ridge accompanied by their fathers and mothers, and sisters and younger brothers.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Hill was a son of Dr. Richard Hill and a member of the firm of Hill, Lamar and Bisset. He had a country seat on the present Midvale Avenue, near the Germantown line. During the Revolution this section was in Roxborough Township. The house is called "Carlton House" and served as the headquarters of American and British Generals alternately during the Revolution. (Genealogy of the Hill Family.)

<sup>2</sup> Horation Gates Jones' "Historic Notes," Page 85.

<sup>3</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Vol. 1, page 921.

<sup>4</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Vol. 1, page 981.

<sup>5</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Vol. 1, page 661.

<sup>6</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 3rd Series, Vol. 5, page 616.

<sup>7</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 3rd Series, Vol. 5, page 653.

<sup>8</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 3rd Series, Vol. 5, page 661.

<sup>9</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Vol. 1, page 927.

"When they reached that part of the Ridge, now Righter Street, back of the farm of Mr. D. Rodney King,<sup>1</sup> they halted and besought their friends to go back home. 'Ah,' said Christopher Ozias, 'their mournful cries, their flowing tears and their affectionate conduct almost broke our hearts, but we stuck up as we felt it to be a duty to fight for our country.'<sup>2</sup> They fell upon their knees and prayed for the safe keeping and return of their loved ones.

"The recruits marched to Philadelphia and thence by way of Trenton and Princeton to Perth Amboy. There were about seventy men in the company.

"Jacob Culp, said he well remembered an incident that occurred during their service in New Jersey. The Roxborough Company was stationed near a bridge, behind some fence rails which they had thrown up in a pile. The British were not far off and were firing pretty sharply. As Joseph Sturges raised his head a bullet passed through his ear and he cried out at the top of his voice 'Boys! We will all be killed!' "<sup>3</sup>

The day after the battle of Brandywine which took place September 11, 1777, Washington retreated through Darby, crossed the Schuylkill and went into camp near Germantown. He made his headquarters at Henry Hill's (before mentioned). After recuperating for two days the army again crossed the Schuylkill and advanced along the Lancaster Road. The two armies came within sight of each other between Goshen Meeting and the White Horse Tavern. Fighting started, and an awful rainstorm so wet the powder of both armies that they withdrew. Washington marched his troops to the Yellow Springs and from thence to Warwick or French Creek. Generals Wayne and Smallwood were dispatched to keep watch on the movements of the British. On Sept. 20, 1777, Wayne was surprised and nearly three hundred of his men were killed or wounded at the Paoli Massacre.

On September 21st, Howe made a feigned march toward Reading, as if to capture the military stores there, and Washington moved up

the east side of the Schuylkill as far as Pottsgrove (Pottstown). On the 22nd, Howe countermarched, crossed the river at Gordon's Ford (now Phoenixville) and Fatland Ford (below Valley Forge) and pushed toward Philadelphia.

Washington says: "The enemy, by a variety of perplexing manoeuvres throughout the country from which I could not derive the least intelligence, contrived to pass the Schuylkill last night at the Fatland and other fords in the neighborhood of it. They marched immediately toward Philadelphia. They had so far got the start before I received certain intelligence that any considerable number had crossed, that I found it in vain to think of overtaking their rear, with troops harassed as ours had been since the battle of Brandywine . . . Why I did not follow immediately, I have mentioned; but the strongest reason against being able to make a forced march, is want of shoes. Messrs. Carroll, Chase and Penn, who were some days with the army, can inform Congress in how deplorable a situation the troops are for want of that necessary article. At least one thousand men are barefooted and have performed the marches in that condition."<sup>1</sup>

#### THE BRITISH MARCH DOWN THE RIDGE:

Howe's army travelled toward Philadelphia in two divisions; one down the Ridge Road through Roxborough; the other down Germantown Pike through Germantown and encamped in the fields on the edge of the town, which Washington had shortly before vacated. This was on the 25th of September. The next day Howe dispatched Cornwallis to occupy Philadelphia but the main body of troops remained encamped near Germantown.

Mrs. Mary Levering, then a girl of seventeen, related that she had a distinct recollection of seeing the British soldiers marching through Roxborough at this time. She said, "In the morning, an American named Jacob Spader, passed up the road on horseback with dispatches of some sort for Washington, but when he got near the county line he saw the enemy coming down and putting spurs to his horse he galloped back again. When we saw him returning he

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Daniel Rodney King owned the ground between the Ridge Road and Righter Street, from Suniac Street to a short distance below Hermit St. He purchased it in 1855. In 1866 he sold the property to Dr. Wm. Camac, who built "Woodvale."

<sup>2</sup> Related to Horatio Gates Jones by Christopher Ozias in 1845.

<sup>3</sup> Related to Horatio Gates Jones by Jacob Culp in 1845.

<sup>1</sup> Sherman Day's "Historical Collection of Pennsylvania." Page 489.



went out and asked him the reason. He replied, "The British are coming!" and on he went. When near Vandaren's mill his horse gave out, and he went to Vandaren's stable and got another, leaving his own there. Presently the British followed. First came three horsemen—the most splendid looking men—on noble prancing steeds. Then followed the artillery and light horse. At first they came along at intervals, but soon the road was crowded, and thus they went nearly all day. The sight was splendid and the appearance of this great army attracted the attention of all the neighborhood."<sup>1</sup>

Washington with his little force of ill-fed and poorly clothed soldiers was encamped at Pottsgrove (Pottstown). His whole force numbered only 8000 continentals and 3000 militia, and with these he moved to Skippack Creek on September 30th.

The British lay encamped at Germantown, under General Howe, whose headquarters were at Stenton, the seat of the Logan family. The main body of the British forces was encamped across the middle of Germantown, beginning at the Schuylkill River and extending along the west side of School House Lane to the Market House. The forces near the Schuylkill were the Hessians under Major General Baron Knyphausen, who occupied as his headquarters the house of Henry Hill (Carlton House).

To guard the passage of the Wissahickon at the Ridge Road, there was a redoubt erected on the east bank of the creek, on the bluff in the rear of Vandaren's house. It commanded the Ridge Road at the Wissahickon and extended for a distance of half a mile up the creek.

Washington prepared to attack the enemy and part of the plan was for General Armstrong to pass down the Ridge Road with the Pennsylvania Militia and get in the enemy's rear by the Wissahickon.

On the morning of October 3rd the American army arrived at a point on the Skippack Road about 14 miles from the British position. Here they remained until evening and at 7 o'clock took up their line of march down the Skippack Road to the Bethlehem Pike.

General Armstrong, with the Pennsylvania Militia, crossed over to the Ridge Road and guided by George Dannenhower, a Continental soldier, and a native of Germantown, moved down the Ridge to attack the Hessians on the bluff above the mouth of the Wissahickon.

Washington's orders read: "General Armstrong to pass down the Ridge Road and pass by Laverin's Tavern and take guides to cross the Wissahickon Creek above the head of John Van Deering's mill dam, so as to fall above Joseph Warner's new house. The Militia who are to act on the flanks are not to have cannon . . . every officer and soldier to have a piece of white paper on his hat."<sup>1</sup>

So in the gray of the early dawn of October 4th, 1777, the Pennsylvania Militia marched down the old Ridge Road. The Roxborough men were in Captain Matthew Holgate's Company. They are now passing Joseph Stearn's house at the 8th milestone, on the east side of the Ridge opposite Domino Lane. The upper end of this house was built in 1747 by Jacob Cook.

There's General Armstrong in the lead. There's Aaron Levering, Lieut. Col. of the 2nd Battalion. There's Capt. Matthew Holgate and his brothers John and William. There's John Levering and Enoch Levering. There's Anthony and William Levering.

Now they're passing the house of Isaac Cook, Jr., on the same side of the Ridge just below his brother Jacob's, built in 1747 by Isaac Cook, Jr. This house in later years was known as the Patterson House. It was torn down a few years ago when the Green Valley Country Club built its Golf Course. There's John Moyer, John and Joseph Biggony.

They are now at the barn of Isaac Cook, Sr., on the west side. This barn was built between 1724 and 1747. It still stands. There's Adam Bloom, the drummer boy.

Now they're at Godfrey Bockius' house on the same side, just above Paoli Avenue. There are the Righter boys—Michael, Daniel, George, John and Peter. There are the Rittenhouses—

<sup>1</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historic Notes." Page 87.

<sup>1</sup> Scharf & Westcott's "History of Philadelphia."

Jacob, Abraham, William, Martin and Cornellius.

They are now at John Showaker's store on the east side opposite Lemont Street. Here come the boys from upper Roxborough near the County Line—Dennis Streeper, George and Andrew Fight, George Sinn, John, Jacob and Henry Linn, John Rapine, Nicholas Rapine and John Freed.

Now they're passing Partenheimer's Store, at that time Christopher Lentz's house. There's Philip Knouse and his brother Joseph from the west side of the Ridge above the High Point. The story is told of one of these boys marching from Frankford to Philadelphia in a brand new pair of boots. The boots hurt him so that he took them off and marched the rest of the way barefooted, with the boots slung over his shoulder.

Now they're down to Lewis Smick's house at the 7th milestone, just above Hermitage Street, torn down some 25 years ago. There's Lewis Smick now. See him wave his hand to the folks in the house. What must have been the feelings of these men as they passed by their own homes; a half hour later to be on the firing line?

Now they're at the old Levering Hotel at Leverington Avenue, built in 1731 by Wm. & Hannah Levering; torn down recently to make way for a moving picture house. Here comes Henry Keely. There's Richard Bicking, Frederick Ulmore, Tilman Culp, John and Jacob Culp from Ship Lane now called Port Royal Avenue.

There they are at the Green Lane corner where the Roxborough Trust Company stands. At that time Aaron Levering's Curryng Shop stood there. Do you see the "piece of white paper in each man's hat"? No uniforms. Look like a lot of tramps. Quite different from the British Army that marched by here a week ago.

There's Samuel Starne. Later we find him among the Bombadiers in the Artillery. He was fined 12 s. 6 d. this year for absence on Muster days. There's David Whiteman; he was fined also 1 L. 12 s. 6 d. In fact they were all fined more or less this year for the same offense. Seems like a good deal of money, but Continen-

tal money was not worth much at this time. It kept getting lower and lower until in 1781—500 L's were worth but 1 dollar in specie and in May of that year it went out of circulation entirely.

There's Anthony Cook and Andrew Marewine from Domino Lane and Christopher Ozias from Paoli Avenue.

There's Joseph Sturges, Jonathan Taylor and John Wolfe. There's Peter Crispin, Jacob Gilbert and John Eberman. Now they're down to the old Roxborough School House, at Monastery Avenue. There's John Livezey and Hugh Crawford from Shawmont Avenue, then called Livezey's Mill Road. There's Christian Tartar from the log cabin, in the hollow to the east of the Ridge, below Shawmont Avenue.

They are now passing David Whiteman's house now owned by Mr. John Loos. There's Henry Hill from Midvale Avenue and Joseph Warner from School House Lane.

They are now at Andrew Wood's house and barn at Roxborough Avenue, where in December of this year, eighteen of their comrades were slain in cold blood. There's Henry and John Tibben. There's Benjamin and Wm. Morgan from School House Lane.

Now they're going by Thomas Lake's house and barn that stood opposite St. Timothy's Hospital. This house and barn are mentioned in a deed of 1756. The house was torn down about 40 years ago and the barn five or six. There's David Markle and Lawrence Miller who lived back on Rittenhouse Lane.

Now they're passing Wunder's Inn at Walnut Lane. Tradition says that on the evening of this day, after the battle a Masonic Lodge from one of the British Regiments met at this Inn. This venerable old hostelry was torn down in 1917. There's Geo. Fisher and Sebastian Fisher, Philip Zell and William White.

They're down to Jacob Levering's house now, on the west side of the Ridge above Seville Street, built in 1753, and Abraham Levering's on the other side, built in 1750. There's John Stritzell from way down Wissahickon at the foot of the hill.

Now they're going by Wickard Levering's



house at the 6th Milestone on the east side, just above Hermit Lane, built 1743. There's John and Benjamin Gorgas from Gorgas Lane and Peter Care from Care's Lane now Roxborough Avenue.

They're down to Michael Righter's house now, built in 1746, at Righter Street and the Ridge. At this point they wheel to the left and file down Hermit Lane in order "to cross the Wissahickon Creek . . . so as to fall above Joseph Warner's new house" but the Hessians across the Creek engage them in a skirmish and prevent their crossing.

Christopher Ozias said he well remembered the incidents of that day. "The troops marched down the Ridge in the night," said he, "and halted first at Andrew Wood's house. Fifty men were detailed to go down towards the Wissahickon, and a corps of riflemen were also sent, and they succeeded in getting quite close. After considerable firing we were ordered to cross over to Chestnut Hill to join the main army. We marched up to Wise's Mill Road and crossed the Wissahickon at that point. Our brigade lay in a valley and a company was ordered to advance up the hill and reconnoitre. The Roxborough Company was directed to do this. When they reached the top of the hill the first sight we saw was a detachment of British Infantry and Light Horse, who were in a field of Indian Corn. We were going to fire when they retreated, but they soon rallied and fired on us. We returned their fire and fired eight or nine rounds. Their grape shot did little damage, but it plowed up the dirt which was thrown in our faces. Only one of our men was wounded. He was shot in the heel. Fearing they would cut off our communication with the main army, we hastened to make our escape, and went up to what is called 'the Swamp.'"<sup>1</sup>

The Roxborough Company was the last on the field as is proven by the following account of the engagement in a letter to Thomas Wharton, Jr., President of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania, by General John Armstrong:

"To President Wharton.

"Camp near the Trappe, 5th October, 1777.

"Sir: By a forced march of fourteen miles or upwards, on Friday night, General Washington attacked, about sunrise yesterday morning, the British and foreign troops encamped at Germantown, Vanderen's and elsewhere, toward the York Road. The Continental troops drove the principal part of the enemy at Germantown full two miles . . .

"My destiny was against the various corps of Germans encamped at Vanderen's, or near the Falls. Their Light Horse discovered our approach a little before sunrise. We cannonaded from the heights on each side of the Wissahickon, whilst the riflemen on opposite sides acted on the lower ground. About nine I was called to join the General, but left a party with Colonels Evers and Dunlap, and one field-piece, and afterwards reinforced them, which reinforcement, by the by, did not join them until after a brave resistance, they were obliged to retreat, but carried off the field-piece; the other I was obliged to leave in the Horrenduous hills of the Wissahickon, but ordered her on a safe route to join Evers if he should retreat, which was done accordingly. We proceeded to the left, and above Germantown some three miles, directed by a slow fire of cannon, until we fell into the front of a superior body of the enemy, with whom we engaged about three-quarters of an hour, but their grape shot and ball soon intimidated and obliged us to retreat, or rather file off; until then, I thought we had a victory, but to my great disappointment, soon found our army were gone an hour or two before, and *we last on the ground*. We brought off everything but a wounded man or two—lost not quite 20 on the whole, and hope we killed at least quite that number besides diverting the Hessians' strength from the General in the morning. I have neither time nor light to add, but that

"I am, respectfully yours,

"JOHN ARMSTRONG."

There has been considerable controversy as to just where this engagement took place. The bronze tablet, erected by the Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution, at the point where Paper Mill Run empties into the creek, says:

»[ Page thirty-nine ]«

<sup>1</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historic Notes." Page 89.



29/24.

David Whiteman's House



"The Pennsylvania Militia under General John Armstrong occupying the high ground on the west side of the creek opposite this point engaged in a skirmish with the left wing of the British forces, in command of Lieut. General Knyphausen, who occupied the high ground on the east side, along School House Lane."

This would indicate that the engagement took place in the neighborhood of that romantic rock called "Lover's Leap."

On a map made by Daniel Rodney King in 1851<sup>1</sup> is shown the location of what Mr. King supposed to be the remains of entrenchments thrown up by the Militia in this engagement. These lines are shown along Lauriston Street to the east and west of Righter Street and on both sides of Righter Street extending from Sumac to Osborn Streets.

Horatio Gates Jones in his "Historic Notes of Olden Time" supports the supposition that the Militia was stationed in this vicinity.

Washington's orders read "to cross the creek above the head of John Van Deering's mill dam so as to fall above Joseph Warner's new house."

The land through which Hermit Lane runs, containing 80 acres, was owned by Matthew Holgate until 1728. In that year it was purchased by Peter Righter,<sup>2</sup> who, in the same year sold 3 acres of this ground to his son Bartholomew. They are now in the name of Ellen Root. In this ancient deed, they are described as bounded on the west "by the Road leading to the Ford on Wissahickon Creek called Matthew Holgate's Ford."<sup>3</sup>

Peter Righter closed the road and in 1744 the Court was petitioned to lay it out again. It was laid out at this time as it runs now from the Ridge to the second turn, then instead of turning to the left, as it does now, it kept going on down through Hermits Glen, forded the Creek and continued on to Bowman's Lane at the Falls of Schuylkill.<sup>4</sup>

In 1741 Peter Righter sold the remaining 77

acres to his son Michael.<sup>1</sup> Upon the death of Michael in 1786 this ground was divided into eleven parts and allotted to his children and grandchildren. In the division, Hermit Lane is described as a "Cartway or Road, one perch wide" running, as it does now, from the Ridge to the third turn and as bordering on part of nine of the eleven parts, thus indicating that Hermit Lane existed at the time of the Battle of Germantown.

The foot of the lane is at the head of the dam that at that time was John Van Daren's Mill dam and as the mill dam at that time was considerably lower than the present, the foot of the lane would be "above the head" of the dam.

Joseph Warner's "new house," mentioned in the order, stood on the South side of School House Lane, between Vaux Avenue and Warden Drive.<sup>2</sup> This house was owned and occupied by Mr. John F. Orne from 1884 to 1905. It passed into the Warden Estate about this time and was torn down about 1910.

The foot of Hermit Lane is slightly above this point, that is up the creek further, thus indicating that the engagement took place near the foot of Hermit Lane.

Among the boys that stood along the Ridge that morning watching the troops go by, was Samuel Starne's brother Joseph, a boy of fifteen years. The following year we find him mustered in Captain Dull's Company, first Battalion, Philadelphia County Militia, commanded by Col. Daniel Heester.<sup>3</sup> During the War of 1812, he was Captain of the Roxborough Volunteers, attached to the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division Pennsylvania Militia, in the service of the United States from Sept. 12, 1814, to Jan. 2, 1815, under command of Col. John Thompson.<sup>4</sup>

Captain Starne was quite a man of affairs in the early days, being one of the Trustees of the Old Roxborough School in 1804.<sup>5</sup> One of the Commissioners of the "Ridge Turnpike Co." in 1811. A commissioner of the "Schuylkill Navigation Co." in 1815 and in the same year a commissioner of the "Flat Rock Bridge Turnpike Co."

<sup>1</sup> In possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book ADB 142, page 485.

<sup>3</sup> Deed Book ADB 142, page 488.

<sup>4</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 46.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book No. H9, page 367.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book EFL, page 287.

<sup>3</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Volume 1, page 622.

<sup>4</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Volume 7, page 25.

<sup>5</sup> Deed Book EF17, page 309.

Matthew Holgate was elected Representative of the General Assembly of Philadelphia for the balance of the war in 1781.<sup>1</sup> In 1785 he was elected one of the Judges of the 2nd District Court of Philadelphia<sup>2</sup> and in the following year appointed Justice of Common Pleas Court of Philadelphia.<sup>3</sup>

In 1781 Henry Hill was elected Representative of the General Assembly for the balance of the war<sup>4</sup> and in 1785 elected Counsellor for the County of Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup>

Lt. Col. Aaron Levering followed the example set by Cincinnatus and went back to his currying shop.

#### THE MASSACRE AT WOOD'S BARN:

After the battle of Germantown, the American Army returned to its camping ground on the Perkiomen, where it stayed until the 11th of December, at which time it went into winter quarters at Valley Forge.

On December 19th a scouting party consisting of eighteen Virginia troopers of Lee's Dragoons were travelling along the Ridge Road through Roxborough. Toward evening they arrived at the house of Andrew Wood, which stood where the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church now stands at the corner of Roxborough Avenue (then Care's Lane) and the Ridge Road.

They stopped at the house and asked shelter for the night which Mr. Wood, being a patriot, granted. Close to the rear of the house stood the barn which has become famous in Roxborough history as the place where these men met their fate.

After partaking of supper served by Mr. Wood, the troopers retired for the night—some in the house, others in the barn.

Captain Andrew Cathcart, of Meschianza fame, was also out with a scouting party of British dragoons.<sup>6</sup> How he discovered the whereabouts of the American troopers isn't known, but about midnight the sentry detected his approach.

Scarcely had the alarm been given when Cath-

cart and his men came rushing in and began their merciless slaughter. Seven were cut down at once and upon the refusal of the others to surrender, the barn was fired.

Horatio Gates Jones in his "Historic Notes" gives a vivid description of this incident as related to him by Mr. Wood's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor.

"Mr. Wood," says he, "who had feared some such surprise, hastened to escape by the back door, and betook himself to the thick forest towards the Schuylkill, while such of the American Troopers as were mounted, fled by Care's Lane, towards the Wissahickon, and thus escaped among the hills. Meanwhile, Mrs. Wood called out her eldest daughter, and told her to take her sister to Whiteman's. She took her sister by the hand and opened the front door, when several soldiers rushed up, and fiercely demanded where she was going. 'To a neighbor, with the child,' was her reply—and she was then allowed to pass. When she got into the road, which was covered with snow, the heroic girl took her sister on her back, and waded through the snow to the neighbor's house, where she deposited her charge. But as she returned, she beheld flames bursting from the roof and windows of the barn, and threatening to destroy the house! As she entered the house, her mother was nowhere to be seen, and a heartless soldier presented a pistol at her, while, she, trembling with fear, could only exclaim—'What, sir, will you shoot a child?' This language, simple and unaffected as it was, led him to withdraw the weapon. He then inquired where she had been. 'Saving my little sister,' was her reply.

"In the meantime the British discovering that most of the Americans had escaped from the house, rushed to the barn and fell upon such as had been tardy, with pistol and sword, giving them no quarter. Several escaped through the fields, and fled to the woods, where they were afterwards found, either dying or dead. One was discovered in the forest back of R. M. Carlisle's, while several wandered over to Green Lane, to Abraham Levering's where they made themselves known, and night as it was, Anna

<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Volume 5, page 353.

<sup>2</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Volume 5, page 364.

<sup>3</sup> Colonial Records, Volume 15, page 17.

<sup>4</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Volume 5, page 353.

<sup>5</sup> Pennsylvania Archives, 6th Series, Volume 5, page 364.

<sup>6</sup> Scharf & Westcott's "History of Philadelphia."



Levering, a sister of 'The Spy of the Wissahickon', dressed their wounds, took them to the Schuylkill and rowed them across in a canoe. This lady died at an early age and is buried in the rear of the Roxborough Baptist Church.

"Another party of the enemy was employed in searching the house, and supposing that some of 'the rebels' might be concealed in the chimnies, they got bundles of straw, fired them, and placed them in the chimnies to smoke the occupants, if any, out. One of the British informed Mrs. Wood that her husband was shot, but she, of course, knew better. Meanwhile the barn continued to burn, and fearing that the light might attract some of the neighbors, and perhaps the American scouts, the British departed from the scene of their barbarous acts. Mrs. Wood at once hastened to the barn and rescued from the flames as many of the wounded soldiers as she could. When she returned to the house, and met her daughter, she was covered with blood! But another danger, equally fearful, met her, for the sparks from the burning barn fell fast and thick upon the roof of the house, and it caught in several places. To add to her distress, it was found that the well had been rendered useless by the marauders. Her woman's tact at once supplied a remedy, and sending her son John to the roof, she dipped her apron and such clothes as were convenient, into the slop barrel, and by these simple means, the house was preserved.

"The news of the fire was conveyed up the road through Roxborough by an old woman, named Elizabeth Colwell, who woke up the neighbors, and cried out 'the British are burning Mr. Wood's house and barn, and soon the whole village will be in ruins.' Mrs. Mary Levering has told me that she heard the old woman as she went up the road.

"At length morning came, and the neighbors assembled in numbers to render assistance, and removed the wounded and the dead into the house, where they received all the attention which generous humanity could prompt. Toward night preparations were made for the interment of the bodies.

"The dead were decently interred in the pri-

vate burial ground of Mr. Wood. The grave was dug by John Wood, then quite a lad, and Henry Tibben, who with several of the neighbors, performed the pious work of consigning the patriots to their last resting place. The exact number of the killed was not remembered, but I believe there were at least half a dozen.

"The foregoing incidents were related to me March 7th, 1845, by the venerated Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, then in the eighty-second year of her age, and were noted by me at the time, and were afterwards reduced to their present form. What added deep interest to the recital was that she was the little girl who carried her sister through the snow, on the memorable night of the massacre!"

"Whiteman's" where Mrs. Wood told Elizabeth to take her sister, was David Whiteman's house, now owned and occupied by Mr. John Loos. At that time it was owned by Andrew Wood and rented to Mr. Whiteman. In his will dated 1801, Andrew Wood bequeathed this house to his wife, Elizabeth.

Abraham Levering's house mentioned, stood on the north side of Green Lane, Manayunk, just below Silverwood Street, where the house of Mr. Isaias T. Ryan now stands. It was built in 1736 by Jacob Levering, son of the Patriarch Wigard and was torn down in 1890.

R. M. Carlisle's house, mentioned in the narrative, was where Robert M. Carlisle lived. It stood on the west side of the Ridge, near Pennsdale Street. The barn was just below Pennsdale Street opposite Memorial Hospital. It was torn down a few years ago when St. Timothy's Church built its rectory.

Mr. Carlisle owned the land from Roxborough Avenue to Pennsdale Street and from the Ridge to Terrace Street. It was conveyed to him by his father, Hudson Carlisle. At the time of the massacre, this land, extending all the way to the river, belonged to Thomas Lake and away back in 1736 it belonged to Andrew Wood's brother John, who owned all the way from Roxborough Avenue to Markle Street and from the Ridge to the river. The old house and barn are mentioned in a deed of 1756 when John Wood's estate was divided after his death.

Returning to the massacre, Horatio Gates Jones bemoaned the fact that no monument commemorated this incident and hoped that some day would see one. His hopes were realized through his own efforts and the efforts of others of Roxborough, for in 1860 the bones of these Virginia Troopers were reinterred in Leverington Cemetery and a dignified granite shaft erected in the centre of the circular plot of ground at the end of the drive which enters the cemetery between Lyceum Avenue and Conarroe Street.

The monument was dedicated on the 28th day of May. The oration was delivered by Horatio Gates Jones. The dedication was accompanied by a military display under the command of Major Chas. Thompson Jones, Mr. Jones' brother.

Under the shaft is cut the following inscription:

THIS MONUMENT IS DESIGNED  
TO PERPETUATE THE MEMORY OF  
VIRGINIA TROOPERS  
TAKEN BY SURPRISE AND  
KILLED AT WOODS BARN  
IN THE WINTER OF 1777-8  
BY A COMPANY OF BRITISH CAVALRY  
ERECTED BY THE  
PENNSYLVANIA DRAGOONS 1860  
HONOR TO THE BRAVE  
THE CONSTITUTION AND THE UNION  
ESTO PERPETUA

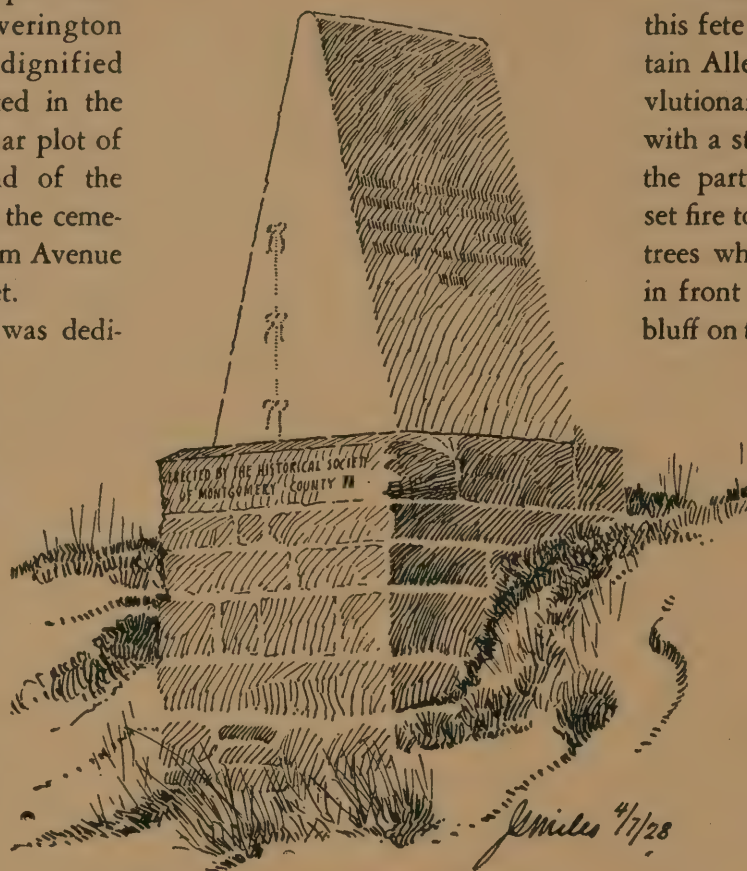
CAPTAIN McLANE BURNS THE ABATTIS  
ALONG SCHOOL LANE:

On the night of May 18, 1778, a magnificent fete, called the Meschianza, was given at the

mansion and grounds of Mr. Joseph Wharton, near the present 5th and Washington Avenue, Philadelphia. This fete consisted of a regatta, tournament, banquet and ball, given in honor of General Howe by his field officers on the occasion of his departure for England.

"While the festivities of this fete were going on, Captain Allen McLane, of Revolutionary fame, was busy with a stratagem to break up the party. His plan was to set fire to the abattis or felled trees which they had placed in front of their redoubts on bluff on the south side of Wis-

sahickon Creek extending from Germantown to the Schuylkill River. He had a hundred infantry in four squads, supported by Clow's dragoons. At ten o'clock that night they had reached the abattis. His men carried kettles, filled with combustibles, with



Monument at Barren Hill

which at the proper signal, they fired the whole line of the dried trees. The British beat the long roll, and their alarm guns were fired from the Schuylkill to the Delaware, and were answered from the Park in Southwark. The ladies, however, were so managed by the officers as to have taken the cannonade for anything but the fact, and therefore continued the sports of the night, but the officers in charge, on the lines, understood the nature of the trouble and gave pursuit and assault.

"McLane having accomplished his purpose, which was simply to annoy the garrison, retreated along the Road to Wissahickon, galloped up the Ridge, pursued by the British dragoons as far as Barren Hill, where his picket and an ensign were captured. Here he left the



Ridge and turned toward the Schuylkill. He escaped by swimming his horse across the river, being protected by Morgan's riflemen, who were stationed on the opposite shore."<sup>1</sup>

#### LAFAYETTE AT BARREN HILL:

Two days later, on the 20th of May, 1778, occurred an incident at Barren Hill which is commemorated by a white marble monument along the Ridge at that point. There are several accounts of this engagement. One by General Wilkinson, one by Lossing, one by the Marquis de Chastellux and others, and while they all agree in the main points, they do not agree in detail concerning the movements of the British, especially in those of Generals Gray, Howe and Clinton. General Wilkinson was partially connected with the episode, and possibly more familiar with the details than the other historians of later date, his account has been selected in its entirety and given here.<sup>2</sup>

"As the spring opened, and the season for operations approached, to put the men in exercise, and to approximate an elite corps to the enemy, General Washington selected about 2400 of his best troops, and detached them from his cantonment at the Valley Forge, across the Schuylkill, under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette; a young nobleman, admired and beloved by the whole army, for his amiable disposition, his charming manners, great gallantry, and ardent attachment to the cause of the country. In addition to the motives assigned for his movement, it may, with plausibility at least, be added, that this detachment was instructed, without commitment, to seal up the intercourse between the city and the country, and to harass the enemy by such enterprises, as occasions might invite, and discretion warrant. The Argus-eyed Mercury McLane, who had been sent into the State of Delaware to levy contributions of provisions in the course of the winter, having resumed his station on the lines of the enemy, between the Delaware and the Schuylkill, the Marquis, at four leagues distant, might have slept in security, against the ruse de guerre of the enemy, but he omitted no nec-

essary precaution, and arriving at Barren Hill Church on the morning of the 18th of May, he addressed the following letter to Captain McLane:

'Woods near Barren Hill Church,  
'9 o'clock A. M. 18th May, 1778.

'Dear Sir:

'I have just now received your letter, and wish you would come down immediately, that I might speak to you of several things; inquire, if you please, if the people think there will be a market tomorrow? I wish also you would see if some man to be depended on, and of credit with the enemy, would undertake a visit to the city for twelve guineas. Is it known towards the British lines that a detachment has been ordered from our army?

'Your's,

M. DE LA FAYETTE.'

"This note of the Marquis found Captain McLane near Germantown, who immediately waited on him at Barren Hill Church, and the necessary precautions were taken to prevent surprise; the advantage, therefore, obtained over the Marquis, may be accounted for on grounds little understood, which will acquit him of the want of caution, and will now be detailed. Proctor's regiment of artillery, originally levied by the state of Pennsylvania, had been transferred to the United States, and a re-organization taking place, it was the lot of a Lieutenant C. to be excluded from the service, who, in disgust, opened a correspondence with the enemy, and became a spy to Sir William Howe; and the better to fulfil his new engagement, he kept up his acquaintance with his former comrades, and frequently visited the cantonment of Valley Forge. To prevent the necessity of direct intercourse with Philadelphia, and thereby to avoid suspicion, this traitor had established a rendezvous in the Frankford creek with General Howe's messenger, where he used to deliver his communications; and it was by this channel the enemy were apprised of the Marquis' movement, almost as soon as he had reached Barren Hill Church.

"On receiving the intelligence, Sir William Howe determined to make a vigorous effort to

<sup>1</sup> Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution," Volume 2, page 105.

<sup>2</sup> General Wilkinson's "Memoirs," Volume —, page 828.

intercept the Marquis for which purpose, General Grant, accompanied by Sir William Erskine, with 5000 select troops, was ordered, by a forced night march, to turn the Marquis' left and get into his rear, whilst General Grey, moving in concert by the Ridge road, was to take possession of the heights near the falls of Schuylkill, and prevent his escape by Levering's ford.<sup>1</sup>

"Captain McLane was on the alert, but could discover no indication of any movement of the enemy on the 18th, or before the night of the 19th; the British General, to mask his enterprise, having by double guards strictly interdicted all communication with the country; but the silence which ensued this precaution, caused our partisan to increase his vigilance. On the morning of the 19th, McLane was joined by Captain William Parr, of Morgan's rifle corps, an officer of distinguished bravery, with eighty men, and after nightfall, as was his custom, he advanced towards the enemy's lines, his evening patrols having reported everything quiet; but in crossing the country he fell in with a couple of the enemy's grenadiers at the three mile run,<sup>2</sup> who pretended to be deserters, from whom he learned, that General Grant had marched at twilight, with the grenadiers and light infantry, on the Old York Road, and that a body of Germans were getting ready to march up the Schuylkill. These combined movements left no doubt on his mind that the Marquis was their object, and he took his measures accordingly. Captain Parr was despatched across the country with the detachment to get possession of Wanderer's Hill, with orders to oppose the column of the enemy, which might advance on the Ridge road, to the last extremity, and McLane in person pressed forward to the Marquis by the shortest route.

"General Grant had marched out of Philadelphia on the Germantown road, about eight o'clock, turned off at the Rising Sun, on the Old York road which he pursued for some distance, where he wheeled short to his left, and fell into the Limekiln road, by which and the Church

road, he proceeded to White Marsh, crossed the Wissahickon, and again turning to his left, he reached Plymouth Meeting House a little before sunrise, and halted believing he had got the Marquis in a cul de sac and that he had nothing more to do but spring the net. General Grant had marched under cover of night near twenty miles in nine hours, his troops of course must have been too much fatigued for a vigorous attack; but whether it was this circumstance which caused his halt, or whether he waited the approach of General Grey, who commanded the column in the Ridge road, and had much the shortest distance to march, I am unable to say; certain it is, however, that his halt favoured the Marquis's retreat.

"I left McLane and Parr on the wing from the three mile run. The former reached Barren Hill about daybreak, and imparted his apprehensions to the Marquis, who could scarcely credit his report, when it was confirmed by Captain Parr's Detachment, which had got possession of the heights above the falls of Schuylkill in season to engage General Grey's column, and check its advance; and satisfactory information of Grant's movement reached him about the same moment from an opposite quarter, and I take pleasure in recording the following instance to patriotic zeal. In passing White Marsh, the noise of the British column awoke a Captain Stone of the militia, an inhabitant, who, on making the discovery, jumped from a back window of his house and ran naked across the country towards Barren Hill until exhausted, when his report was taken up and carried to the Marquis in the same manner by Richard Bartleston, who resided near the meeting house.

"The Marquis now found his situation too exigent for deliberation, and therefore instantly determined to retire by Matson's ford<sup>1</sup> on the Schuylkill. After communicating to the Marquis, McLane joined Captain Parr at Wanderer's Hill, and having amused the yagers in front of General Grey, to gain time for the Marquis, he crossed the Schuylkill at Levering's ford and General Howe retraced his steps to Philadelphia."

<sup>1</sup> A short distance below the point where the Manayunk Bridge crosses the Schuylkill.

<sup>2</sup> On Germantown Road.

<sup>1</sup> Now Conshohocken.



By consulting the map which accompanies these memoirs it is found that "Wanderer's Hill" to which Captain Parr was dispatched, coincides with Vandaren's Hill at Wissahickon and evidently is a typographical error.

It may be that the entrenchments discovered by Daniel Rodney King along Righter and Lauriston Street and of which he drew a map in 1851, were dug by Captain Parr's men.

Lossing says, "Lafayette at once comprehended the situation. A skillful manoeuvre was instantly conceived. He changed his front without disorder, stationed a large party in the churchyard around which was a stone wall, and drew up the remainder in such a manner as to be protected by the stone houses and thick woods. Ascertaining that the Ridge Road to Swede's Ford<sup>1</sup> was in possession of the enemy, he resolved to retreat to Matson's Ford.

"The road lay along the southern slope of hills and was concealed by woods from the view of the enemy . . . They crossed the Schuylkill with their artillery, took possession of the high ground on the west side of the river and formed in order of battle. General Grant had marched to the Church or Barren Hill, where he joined the division under Clinton and discovered with mortified pride that he had been outmanoeuvred.

"It was too late to overtake the retreating patriots. The British pursued them as far as the ford, but finding it impossible to cross over, they wheeled and returned, disappointed and chagrined, to Philadelphia. In a skirmish with the enemy's advanced parties at the ford while the artillery was crossing, the Americans lost nine men killed and taken. The British lost two light horsemen killed and several wounded. Lafayette and his troops marched back to camp at Valley Forge, where they were greeted with the most enthusiastic congratulations."<sup>2</sup>

According to Lossing's description and to General Wilkinson's map, the road by which Lafayette retreated is variously called Spring Mill road, Barren Hill road and Cherry Lane. It runs from Barren Hill down through a beauti-

ful valley west of the Ridge by the extensive grounds of the Andorra Nurseries and on past the famous bubbling springs at Spring Mill. When it reaches the Schuylkill River it turns sharply to the west, through Spring Mill, along the river and on to Conshohocken Bridge. Where the bridge stands now is the place where Matson's Ford crossed the river.

"The old ford crossed the Schuylkill in an oblique direction, running westwardly from a location indicated at this time (1900) on the east side, by the lower end of Henderson Supplees flour mill and coming out on the western shore above the upper end of the present Conshohocken worsted mills, where two roads branched: one leading up the hill and around into Gulph creek valley, and the other leading over the flats down stream, passing in front of Matson's house. The site of the ford can be seen at low water."<sup>1</sup>

According to the Marquis de Chastellux, about fifty Indian Scouts accompanied Lafayette and were stationed along the east side of the Ridge just above Port Royal Avenue. After Parr had left Vandaren's hill at Wissahickon, General Grey continued up the Ridge, preceded by some fifty dragoons, who met the Indians above Port Royal Avenue.

As Indians had never seen Redcoats, and Redcoats had never seen Indians, each was so surprised and scared at the other, that both turned and fled—the Indians to the river, across which they swam and the dragoons back to the city.

In connection with this incident, Horatio Gates Jones says: "Some years ago (about 1845) when conversing with the late aged Mrs. Rebecca Levering, she informed me that she lived close by the Schuylkill and remembered the day that Lafayette crossed the river. She said she was struck with astonishment by seeing a large number of Indians running towards the river, and as they reached the bank, they jumped in and swam across . . . and added, that it was a very funny sight to see so many in the water at once, with only their heads visible."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Norristown.

<sup>2</sup> Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution, Vol. 2, page 122.

<sup>1</sup> Sketches, Vol. IV, Historical Society of Montgomery Co., by M. S. Gordon Smythe.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historical Notes."

All Revolutionary historians are loud in their praise of Captain Allen McLane. He was chosen by General Washington to command a troop of 150 picked dragoons whose duty it was to harass the enemy and gain all the information possible as to his movements, thus exposing themselves to great danger. They were constantly on the qui vive and often had to resort to very quick wit to extricate themselves from perilous positions. They were a daredevil sort and when there wasn't anything in particular to do they generally hatched a plot of some kind, such as the burning of the abattis on the night of the Meschianza.

McLane was distinguished for his personal courage and stories of his deeds of bravery were told and retold long after the war was over.

Upon the successful retreat at Barren Hill he received the following letters of commendation.<sup>1</sup>

"Camp Valley Forge, May 20, 1778

"Dear Captain:

"I am happy you have with your brave little party conducted with so much honour to yourself. The Marquis affected, owing to your vigilance, a glorious retreat, as well as a difficult one.

"Your very humble servant

"ALEX. SCAMMEL, ADJ. GEN."

"Camp Valley Forge, 23rd May 1778.

"Dear Captain:

"I am proud to hear you are still doing something to distinguish yourself in the eyes of your country. I have the pleasure to inform you, that your conduct with the Marquis has been very pleasing to His Excellency and the whole army.

"I am your obedient servant

"CHARLES SCOTT, BRIG. GEN.

and Officer of the Day."

Captain McLane survived the war and died in Wilmington in 1829 at the patriarchal age of eighty-three.

#### DEPREDACTIONS IN ROXBOROUGH BY THE HESSIANS

The following are incidents which happened in Roxborough while the British occupied Phila-

delphia, as told by Horatio Gates Jones.<sup>1</sup>

"Secluded as Roxborough was from the rest of the County of Philadelphia, yet from its proximity to the Hessian Redoubt<sup>2</sup> and camp it was frequently visited by those mercenaries, and our citizens were plundered of their meat, grain, vegetables, and other articles. I have fortunately obtained from several aged persons (now dead), a number of anecdotes . . .

"Mrs. Mary Levering, whose father resided on the Ridge, near the eighth mile stone, said that her father's house was often visited by Hessians who carried off whatever they could get. They came once on a wash day, and she and her sister retreated to the garret where they concealed themselves. The soldiers not only took the provisions, but the clothes from the tubs. They also went into the cellar and drew off the cider into buckets. At a neighbor's house they caught and killed a sheep, and having taken out the viscera, threw the animal on a horse and rode off.

"On another occasion they came to the house of Lewis Smick,<sup>3</sup> . . . They ransacked the house, and then went into the garden and cut off the cabbages . . .

"In the position of affairs at that time it was almost impossible to know whom to trust. Oftentime a mere word would consign a man to arrest and imprisonment, as was the case with Joseph Starn, who resided where Mr. Simon Snyder now lives.<sup>4</sup> Having had a horse and cow stolen by the British, he went to Germantown, saw Sir William Howe, and obtained a pass and authority to search for his missing beasts. He was absent three days, and the report got out that he had joined the enemy. What confirmed the report, was his intimacy with Mr. Livezey, who as a Quaker, was known to be opposed to the war. Some time after, a company of American Light Horse, disguised as British troopers, called at his house, and very naturally he spoke favorably of their army. Upon the strength of these facts he was arrested and carried to Whitemarsh and put in the Pro-

<sup>1</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historical Notes," page 92.

<sup>2</sup> Along School Lane.

<sup>3</sup> This house stood where Gorgas Park is now.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Harmon Robinson lives in this house at present.



vost. As soon as his neighbors heard of this calamity, they went over to the camp, and represented the true state of the case to General Washington, but before anything was done towards his release, he died . . .

"One evening Lewis Smick and several of his neighbors had assembled in his wheelwright shop—then adjoining his house on the west . . . to husk some corn which had escaped the Hessians. Suddenly they were alarmed by the tramp of horsemen, and they found the house surrounded by a troop of American horsemen. Some dismounted and entering, inquired for Hessians. They were told that there were no Hessians about, and that when they did come, it was for plunder . . . Distrusting the assertion, they said they would search the house, which they proceeded to do, but they found no enemy. At last they came to the cellar, and as the door was opened they heard a rustling and a movement, as if some persons

were trying to escape or conceal themselves. For an instant they stood still, with swords drawn, ready for an attack—then calling for lights, they rushed into the cellar in full force, ready to deal destruction to their foes, and crying out, 'Here they are! Here they are!' Great was their chagrin and disappointment, when the enemy proved to be some CHICKENS which Mr. Smick had hidden in the cellar to keep them safe from the Hessians! . . .

"Our soldiers frequently obtained furloughs to visit their parents or families. This often happened while the army was at Valley Forge; but it was a hazardous thing to do, as the enemy were constantly on the watch. On one occasion

Daniel Righter obtained a furlough and came home to Roxborough to visit his father, who then lived where the Manayunk Poorhouse used to be.<sup>1</sup> While he was in the house a party of British, or Hessians, came along, and having a hint that an American soldier was in the house they surrounded it and took him a prisoner. He preserved his presence of mind and affected to believe they were Americans who wished to frighten him, and he told them that he had seen some of their party not far off; but they were not to be caught. So they mounted Daniel on a horse and rode off towards their camp. As they



*Michael Righter House*

passed down the Old Ridge Road<sup>2</sup> Daniel tried another game—a species of ruse de guerre—justifiable, under the circumstances, by the rules of war. He pretended to be crazy, and succeeded so well that he entirely deceived the enemy, who pushed him off the horse into the road, and ere long Daniel had disappeared in the thicket of trees.

"Another of our soldiers, Jacob Levering—a brother of John Levering, who was also in the war, had a more narrow escape than the one just related.

"Jacob, John and Anthony, were sons of Ab-

<sup>1</sup> At the corner of Ridge Road and Righter Street.

<sup>2</sup> Now Righter Street.

raham Levering, who lived on Green Lane in the only house that was in that section of the township.<sup>1</sup> They were all in the army together, and were active friends to the cause.

"Jacob was the most prominent of the three and from his knowledge of the roads and passes of the Wissahickon and Schuylkill, and the country around, he was frequently employed as a scout or spy by General Washington . . . On one occasion in September 1777, he was pursued and arrested.<sup>2</sup> It seems that the British thought that John Levering was the spy and demanded his name. He said it was Jacob Levering, which they were not disposed to believe. They carried him along with them as far as the old ford on the opposite side of the Schuylkill below the bridge<sup>3</sup> and there prepared to hang him to the limb of a large oak to make him confess.

"All the time he was taken he had a pass from Washington in his possession, but by some means he succeeded in eating it. Happily some neighbors saw the collection of troopers, and crossing the river soon convinced the men that he was not John Levering and hence he was spared the elevation between heaven and earth! But his captors carried him toward the city. Colonel Moylan saw him on the first of October and in a letter on that date to General Washington, says:

"I set out last night between eleven and twelve o'clock in consequence of General Reed's information that a party of the enemy's light horse had crossed the Schuylkill at Levering's Ford. I met him (Reed) at Bonner's and agreeable to his advice called at Levering's house, who had returned last evening; the party that seized him gave him his dismissal on the hill leading to the middle ferry, on which he is very confident they crossed; as he is a Whig, I believe he would not deceive me, so that the expedition I set out on is frustrated.'"

In a letter from Colonel Moylan to General Washington dated Oct. 1, 1777, he says: "I believe they are further advanced on that Road (the Ridge) as I saw some Hessians this morn-

ing, half a mile at this side of Vandaren's. They are collecting the grain from every farm as far as the eight mile stone<sup>1</sup> and are this day expected at Levering's on that business. Their parties usually consist of eighty to one hundred infantry and forty or fifty horse. The party that crossed the Schuylkill yesterday were after horses and cattle of which they collected large numbers."

After the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, the Continentals resumed possession and the Assembly passed an Act "for procuring an estimate of the damages sustained by the Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, from the Troops and Adherents of the King of Great Britain during the present war". The County Commissioners were to direct the Assessors of each Township to obtain correct accounts of the damages done.

The following is an estimate of damages returned from the Township of Roxborough:<sup>2</sup>

#### "ROXBOROUGH"

"MICHAEL RIGHTER, *Assessor*.

"John Barndollar,	L 32. 5.	\$86.00
John Bigony,	54.	144.00
Charles Bower,	12.	32.00
Anthony Cook,	15.	40.00
Hugh Crawford,	50.17.6	133.40
Jacob Gilbert,	58. 2.6	155.00
John Holget,	7.12.	20.26
Enoch Levering,	196.15.	524.66
Nathan Levering,	137.18.4	367.76
William Levering,	121.16.	324.79
Nicholas Rapine,	25.	66.66
Daniel Righter,	3.	8.00
John Righter,	68.17.6	182.66
Michael Righter,	39.10	105.33
Lewis Smick,	18.	48.00
Michael Smith,	13.15.	36.66
Adam Snyder,	28. 7.6	75.66
Jonathan Taylor,	49. 9.2	131.89
Andrew Wood,	252.17.	674.26

Total .....\$3,228.99"

These names appear among the Early Settlers in the next Chapter.

<sup>1</sup> This house stood on the west side of Green Lane just below Wood Street on the site of the house now owned and occupied by Mr. Isaiah T. Ryan.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Gates Jones called Jacob Levering the "Spy of the Wissahickon.

<sup>3</sup> The Manayunk Bridge at the foot of Green Lane.

<sup>1</sup> At Domino Lane.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historic Notes," page 105.



### CHAPTER III

## THE EARLY SETTLERS

#### THE FOUNDER, WILLIAM PENN:

Before proceeding with the Early Settlers of Roxborough, it might be well to review briefly our history of the Founder, William Penn.

William Penn was born in London, in 1644, the son of Sir William Penn, Admiral in the British Navy, a man noted for bravery, a friend of the King and a favorite at court. His mother was Margaret Jasper of Rotterdam, Holland, a devotee and pious woman.

William Penn was converted to the Quaker doctrine of religion when quite young, much against the wishes of his father. He became not only a convert, but a leader, a preacher and a writer for the cause of religious liberty and toleration. For this his father put him out. For this he served several terms in prison. His father, finding himself obdurate but withal conducting himself manfully, was finally reconciled to him and left him his large estate at his death.

This estate included a debt of 16,000 pounds which the government owed him. Instead of asking the King for the money, William Penn requested a grant of land in America, intending to establish a colony where men might worship as they pleased.

His father had been a personal friend of Charles II, familiarly known as "The Merry Monarch," the most profligate King England has ever had. The court at this time was in a debased and dissolute condition. For William Penn to have taken the step he did and to have stuck to it, in spite of the allurements of a gay life at such a court, deserves our highest commendation.

His request was granted and King Charles signed the treaty in 1681 whereby William Penn became sole proprietor of 45,000 acres of land which, contrary to Penn's modest wish, was called Pennsylvania.

Before the ink was dry, Penn made plans for disposing of this land. He offered 100 acres for 40 shillings and 5,000 acres for 100 L with 1 shilling per hundred acres per year as quit rent.

He advertised through England, Germany and Holland his terms, with a description of the land and its advantages, also terms of transportation. With such an offer and such inducements, those who for so long had been seeking religious toleration, literally flocked to his standard.

In April, 1681, a month after the signing of the Patent by Charles the Second, Penn published a pamphlet citing the advantages to be gained in settling in Pennsylvania . . . "The passage across the ocean will be at the outside six pounds per head for masters and mistresses and five pounds for servants, children under seven years old fifty shillings, 'except, they suck, then nothing.' Arriving out in September or October, two men may clear as much ground by spring (when they set the corn of that country) as will bring in that time, twelve months, forty barrels, which makes twenty-five quarters of corn. So that by the first year they must buy corn which is usually very plentiful. They must so soon as they come, buy cows, more or less, as they want or are able, which are to be had at easy rates. For swine, they are plentiful and cheap, these will quickly increase to a stock. So that after the first year, what with the poorest sort sometimes laboring to others, and the more able fishing, fowling and sometimes buying they will do very well till their own stocks are sufficient to supply them."

#### THE ORIGINAL TRACTS:

Penn sold the land on terms of Lease and Release, executed in England. The purchaser, upon his arrival in this country presented his deed to the Commissioners, whereupon a warrant was issued to the Surveyor General to lay out the quantity of land called for. Upon this being done the Commissioners issued a Patent.

A map of this land drawn in 1681-2 by Thomas Holme, Penn's first Surveyor General, shows the different tracts bought by the first purchasers.

On this map is found a small group of tracts bounded on the north by "Gulielma Maria," a

narrow strip of land connecting Springfield Manor with the Schuylkill River; on the east by "Germantownship"; on the south by "The Liberty Lands of Philadelphia" and on the west by the Schuylkill River.

Springfield Manor to the north was laid out for William Penn's first wife, Gulielma Maria Springett, and the narrow strip of land to the north bears her name, "Gulielma Maria."

It is a tradition<sup>1</sup> that when Springfield Manor was laid out, Penn's wife requested that a strip of land should be attached to it, leading to the Schuylkill, so that she would be able to reach the river from her own land. Springfield Manor is now Springfield Township of Montgomery County, lying north of and adjoining Chestnut Hill. At this day it has the same singular outline as is given on Holme's map, although in 1876 the river end of the narrow belt of land was taken from Springfield Township, so that if Gulielma Maria Penn were to return today, she would not be able to do as she had requested.

Germantownship to the East, consisted of 5350 acres patented to Francis Daniel Pastorius, in trust and in behalf of the German and Dutch purchasers<sup>2</sup> (The Frankford Land Company) by virtue of three warrants, two in 1683 and one in 1684. The patent was recorded "third day, second month, April in the fifth year of the reign of James the second of England and in the ninth of the Proprietary Government in America, 1689."

The "Liberty Lands," to the south, consisted of a broad belt of land containing about 10,000 acres lying to the north and west of old Philadelphia, extending from the Delaware river westward beyond the Schuylkill to Cobbs Creek and northwestward from old Philadelphia to the Roxborough tract or approximately to School Lane. The Liberties were divided into the Northern and Western Liberties. The Northern Liberties was that part east of the Schuylkill and the Western Liberties, that part west. The name "Liberties" was given them from the fact that Penn's original intention was to give purchasers the privilege of having ten acres apportioned in the Liberty lands, for every

five hundred purchased in the country.

In his "Conditions and Concessions," published by Penn, he says, in Section V, "The proportion of lands, that shall be laid out in the first great town or city, for every purchaser shall be after the proportion of ten acres for every five hundred acres purchased, if the place will allow it." This was found to be impracticable as the city would have to be twelve square miles in area. So the town was laid out from the Delaware to the Schuylkill and from Cedar (South) Street to Vine Street. It was further arranged, in order that the first purchasers might not be wholly disappointed that a city lot be granted to each one of a size proportioned to the land purchased. They were also given six acres for roads, for every hundred purchased.

The small groups of tracts in question, in years became Roxborough Township and later the 21st Ward of Philadelphia. Except for a slight change in its southern boundary, to the present School Lane, the 21st Ward occupies the same area and outline as this group did when laid out on this map in 1681.

A letter written by John Kelpius, leader of the "Hermits of the Ridge," of whom we shall learn later, to Hester Palmer of Flushing, Long Island, is dated "Rocksborrow" May 25, 1706.<sup>1</sup> This is the earliest record we have of the place having a name.

This group was made up of eleven parallel tracts, running "north-north east" and "south-south west" with the name of the purchaser on each tract. Beginning at the southeastern end of the group and going northwestwardly, in consecutive order, the name of the purchaser given on each tract is as follows:

ROBERT TURNER  
RICHARD & ROBERT VICARIS  
JOHN JENNETT  
PHILIP TATUMAN  
FRANCIS FINCHER  
JAMES CLAYPOOLE  
SAMUEL BENNETT  
CHARLES HARTFORD  
RICHARD SNEE  
CHARLES JONES  
JONAS SMITH

<sup>1</sup> Bean's History of Montgomery Co., page 1071.

<sup>2</sup> Exemplification, Book 1, page 176.

<sup>1</sup> Julius F. Sachse, "German Pietists in Pennsylvania," page 191.



These tracts<sup>1</sup> were granted by William Penn and confirmed by his Commissioners. In the patents, each tract is defined as "whereas there is a certain piece of land in the County of Philadelphia"; there being only three counties laid out at that time—Philadelphia, Bucks and Chester. The dates of all of them are given in the old style when the year began in March; the new style which was introduced in 1753, made January the first month of the year.

The patents for all these tracts require the purchasers to pay one English Silver Shilling, for each hundred acres "to the Proprietary or his heirs, at or upon the last day of the 1st month of every year, in Philadelphia, to such person or persons as shall from time to time be appointed for that purpose." This was called "Quit Rent" and when the ground was sold, each subsequent purchaser was subject to "the proportionable part of the above Proprietary's original yearly Quit Rent of one shilling for each hundred acres." These quit rents were a source of great embarrassment and uneasiness to Wm. Penn. In a letter to Thomas Lloyd, Deputy Governor, dated 7th month, 1686, Penn complains that his quit-rents were at least 500 L a year and then due, though he could not get one penny.<sup>2</sup> The quit-rent question caused al-

most immediate discontent in Pennsylvania and undoubtedly injured the Proprietary's popularity. Many were found who justified their non-compliance on the pretext that the quit-rents should be reserved for the country to defray the expenses of the government. By an Act of Assembly Nov. 27, 1779, they were abolished.

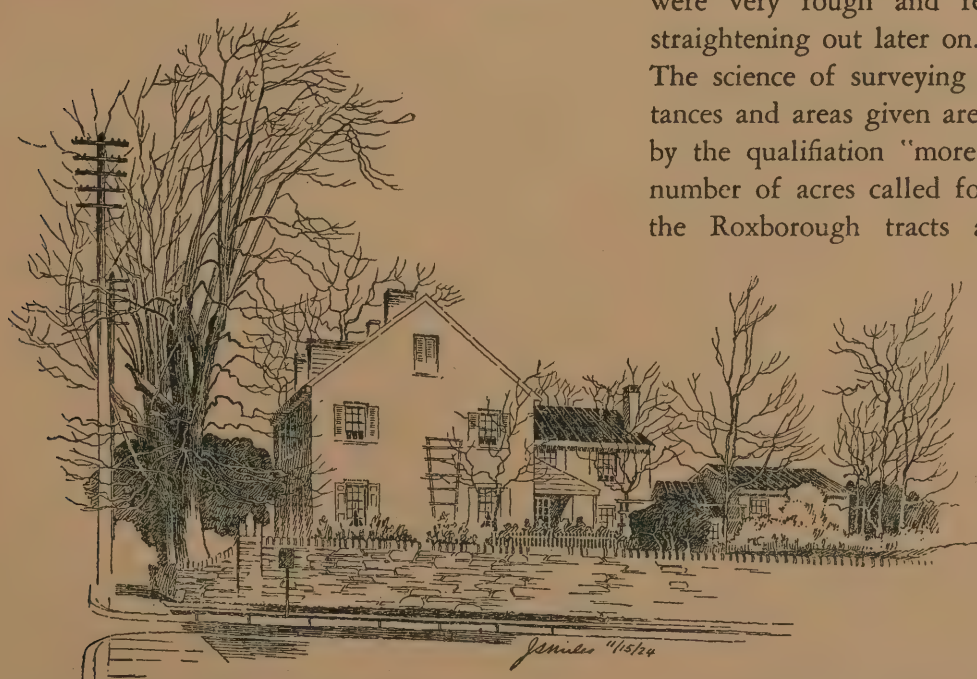
In 1763 we find a deed in which the rent is stipulated to be paid in "Spanish coined, fine silver pieces-of-eight, each of such pieces-of-eight weighing seventeen pennyweight and six grains." These were the same "Pieces-of-eight" that Long John Silver's parrot, in Stevenson's "Treasure Island," kept constantly screaming for. Where is the boy that hasn't read that famous book?

In the Patents the boundary lines of these tracts were marked by "a red oak," "a white oak," "a hickory tree," "a gum tree," "an oak sapling," "a dogwood sappling," "a post," "a heap of stones," "a line of marked trees" and such other perishable and movable objects. The northwest and southeast boundary lines of the tracts ran parallel to each other, and the directions given were "north, north east" and "south, south west."

The directions and distances given in the Patents and in the early deeds which followed, were very rough and required considerable straightening out later on. Ground was cheap. The science of surveying was crude. The distances and areas given are invariably followed by the qualification "more or less." The total number of acres called for in the Patents for the Roxborough tracts amounted to 4062,

whereas the actual number is 4972. Sometimes deeds were recorded many years after the conveyances were made; sometimes not at all. Sometimes they were lost altogether as is recited in subsequent deeds.

Many of the



*The Rittenhouse Homestead*

<sup>1</sup> See Plan No. 1 in folder at back of book.

<sup>2</sup> Proud's History of Pennsylvania, Vol. I, page 303.

present day streets and lanes running east and west, are on the boundary lines between the original tracts, this being the natural location for roads in the early days. Others are along the original lines of "one perch wide" roads or cartways leading to the mills along the Wissahickon or "laid out to accommodate parcels or lots of land" as the tracts were sold off.

As Abram's name was changed to Abraham and his wife's from Sarai to Sarah so were many names of the early pioneers of Roxborough changed. Richter and Rittinghuysen were Anglicized to Righter and Rittenhouse. Houlgate was changed to Holget, then to Holgate; Bergendohler changed to Barndollar, Ozeas to Ozias, Bartleson to Bartle and Rebint to Rapine. Stern changed to Starn and then to Starne. Wigard Levering's first name suffered more than his last, going through all the evolutions possible and changing as often as it was written.

Horatio Gates Jones in his "Historic Notes" says that Mrs. Elizabeth Taylor, a daughter of Andrew Wood and grand-daughter of John George Wood, told him that her grand-father's name originally was Johann Yorick Holz and that he anglicized it from the German to its English equivalent, John George Wood. This is corroborated in a deed between Jacob Rinker and Benjamin Shoemaker in 1742 for a piece of ground on the east side of the Wissahickon adjoining George Wood's land in which part of it was bounded by "George Wood's alias Holtz land."<sup>1</sup>

None of the ground in the Roxborough tract was settled by the original purchasers but was held for speculation. Some of the purchasers did not even immigrate. All of the tracts extended from the Schuylkill River to the present Wissahickon Avenue.

#### ROBERT TURNER'S TRACT:

Beginning at the southern end and going northward, the first tract was purchased by Robert Turner in 1683. Robert Turner was a close friend of William Penn. He was one of the Provincial Judges and one of Penn's Commissioners who confirmed his grants after the

grants had been surveyed. Turner's tract contained 500 acres. The southern boundary line of this tract ran from a point, where School House Lane extended meets the river, to Wissahickon Avenue a short distance below Midvale Avenue. Its northern boundary coincided with Sumac Street, Wissahickon. In the patent it is called "Shomack Park," no doubt on account of the many Sumac trees on it.

In 1686 Robert Turner rented 50½ acres of his tract to Joshua Tittery, broad glass maker, who took Richard Townsend, Millwright, into partnership and built the saw and corn mills near the mouth of the Wissahickon Creek. This was the first mill built along the Wissahickon.

The mills that Tittery and Townsend built were known as the "Wissahickon Mills" and later as the "Robeson Mills" and the "Vandaren's Mills."

In 1689 Tittery and Townsend took a third partner in with them named John Tysache. In 1691 Andrew Robeson and Chas. Sanders purchased the mills and mill lands from Tittery, Townsend and Tysache and the entire 500 acres from Robert Turner. In 1696 Joseph and Benjamin Morgan bought 300 of the 500 acres from Samuel Robeson and Chas. Sanders.

John Vandaren bought the mill in 1760. It was this mill that was mentioned in Washington's order to General Armstrong on the morning of the Battle of Germantown, Oct. 4, 1777 "to pass down the Ridge Road and take guides to cross the Wissahickon Creek above the head of John Van Deering's mill dam." It was also Vandaren's Hill at Wissahickon, on the Ridge Road from Wissahickon Creek to Roxborough, to which Captain Parr was dispatched on the 19th of May, 1778, to head off the British troops under General Grey from coming up the Ridge Road, when Lafayette was encamped at Barren Hill. In 1789 the mill and 263 acres of land were sold at sheriff's sale to Peter and Jonathan Robeson.

The name of Richard Townsend who with Joshua Tittery built the "Wissahickon Mills" is found among the passengers sailing on the *Welcome*<sup>1</sup> as "Richard Townshend, or Town-

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book No. 12, page 321.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Armstrong's address before the Pennsylvania Historical Society at Chester in 1851.



send, wife Anna, son James (born on 'Welcome' in Delaware River) of London. First Purchaser. A Reading Friend and eminent Minister. Miller at Upland and on Schuylkill."

In 1727 Richard Townsend gave the following testimony: "In 1682, several ships being provided for Pennsylvania, I found a concern on my mind to embark with them, with my wife and child. I went aboard the "Welcome," in company with my worthy friend William Penn, whose good conversation was very advantageous to all the company . . . At our arrival, we found it a wilderness: the chief inhabitants were Indians and some Swedes who received us in a friendly manner . . . After a time, I set up a mill on Chester Creek, which I brought ready framed, from London, which served for grinding corn and sawing of boards and was of great use to us. Besides, I, with Joshua Tittery, made a net, and caught great quantities of fish which supplied ourselves and many others . . . About the time that Germantown was laid out, I settled on my tract of land, which was about a mile from thence, where I set up a barn and corn mill . . . In this location, separated from any provision market, we found fresh meat very scarce, and on one occasion we were supplied by a very particular providence, to wit: As I was in my meadow, mowing grass, a young deer came and looked on me while I continued mowing. Finding him to continue looking on, I laid down my scythe and went towards him, when he went off a little way—I returned again to the mowing, and the deer again to its observation. So that I several times left my work to go towards him and he as often gently retreated. At last when going towards him and he not regarding his steps, whilst keeping his eyes on me, he struck forcibly against the trunk of a tree and stunned himself so much as to fall, when I sprang upon him and fettered his legs. From thence I carried him home to my house about a quarter of a mile, where by the assistance of a neighbor who happened to be there, he was killed to the great benefit of my family."<sup>1</sup>

Richard Townsend afterward settled in Bris-

tol Township, Bucks County. We find him later purchasing ground in Roxborough on which his descendants settled, becoming prominent citizens in early Roxborough.

#### RICHARD AND ROBERT VICARIS TRACT:

The next tract on Holme's map contains the name of Richard and Robert Vicaris. This patent is not on record but is cited in a deed of Release between Robert, son of Richard Vickeris, late of Chen Magna, Great Britain, Gentleman, to another son Thomas Bishop Vickeris, 1735. This recital refers to the tract as being patented to Richard Vickeris in 1689 and says "but by length of time and accidents the deeds and conveyances of same are not at present to be found." In 1740 Thomas Bishop Vickeris, by letter of Attorney, authorized Thomas Penn, son of William Penn, to dispose of all his lands in Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup>

The Vickeris tract contained 446 acres and extended from Sumac Street to Markle Street.

#### THE HERMITS OF THE RIDGE:

On this tract, along Hermit Lane, in the neighborhood of where Major Thomas S. Martin now lives, there lived a Colony of 40 men called Pietists or Mystics. Before going further it might be well to give a short history of their career.<sup>2</sup> They were also called the "Hermits of the Ridge" and "The Monks of the Wissahickon." They were a devout and religious set of men, well educated and of good families.

They came from various parts of Germany in 1694 to escape religious intolerance there and to prepare for and witness the coming of the millennium, which according to their organizer, John Jacob Zimmerman, a noted astronomer and mathematician, was to take place in the fall of that year.

They also came to put into execution a long cherished plan of founding a true Theosophical Community in the Wilderness like Elijah and John the Baptist and other Biblical characters, to perfect themselves in holiness.

On the eve of their departure from London,

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book G-1, page 187.

<sup>2</sup> Julius F. Sachse, "German Pietists in Pennsylvania."

<sup>1</sup> Prouds History of Pennsylvania, Vol. 1, page 229.

their leader, John Jacob Zimmerman, died and John Kelpius became Majister.

They arrived in Germantown on June 24th, St. John the Baptist's day 1694. Germantown at that time consisted of only a few houses on a single street. Soon after their arrival they came from Germantown to this place which they called the Wilderness and built a large square building of logs which they called the Tabernacle. In this tabernacle was a large room called the "Saal" used for religious purposes, a school room and small cell like rooms. On the roof was a lantern or observatory called the "sternwarte" where astronomical observations were made at night and where at the same time they looked for and expected to see the fulfillment of Revelation, Chapter 12, verses 14 and 16, which read as follows:

"And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished, for a time, and times and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

"And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth."

For this reason they were given the effeminate sobriquet of "The Society of the Woman in the Wilderness."

They studied Mathematics, Astronomy, Astrology, Philosophy and Theosophy. Some experimented in Alchemy and Chemistry. Others busied themselves in Pharmaceutical experiments endeavoring to discover the "Elixir of Life." Some employed their time in casting the horoscope to foretell the life or fortune of a person, and in the use of the divining rod, to locate subterranean springs of water or veins of precious metal beneath the surface of the ground. In many other ways they endeared themselves to the residents of the surrounding country, and made themselves generally useful. In addition to all these activities, they cultivated a garden and planted an orchard.

Kelpius built for himself a stone vault or cave in the side of the hill, where he might seclude himself for silent meditation and prayer. He died in 1708 at the early age of 35.

He was of the firm belief that he would not suffer death but would be translated, as Elijah was, but when his last hour drew near and he became convinced that such was not to be, he directed that a mysterious, sealed casket, which he possessed, be thrown into the Schuylkill River. This was done and as the casket disappeared beneath the surface "flashes of lightning and peals like thunder came from out of the water."<sup>1</sup>

After his death, discipline relaxed. The vigils in the "sternwarte" which at first had been kept so faithfully grew fewer and were finally abandoned. The strict devotional exercises in the "Saal" became fewer and the mystical researches and theosophical speculations were neglected. Some of them broke their vows of celibacy and married.

Upon the death of Kelpius, John Sehlee was elected Majister, but refused the honor, preferring to live by himself in a cabin on the farm of William Levering, son of the pioneer Wigard Levering. When he died in 1745 he willed his entire estate to "my friend William Levering Sen of Roxborough."<sup>2</sup>

The inventory of his estate contained the following items: "25 shirts, 4 coats, 2 jackets, 2 hats, pair of shoes & slippers, 7 pairs linen drawers, 3 planes, 2 saws, 1 glue pot, 54 glass bottles, 5 book binder presses, saddle and bridle, 1 scale, gold & silver weights, 5 Bibles, 14 books, 10 of Jacob Boehmen's books and 120 Latin, Dutch and Greek books."

He also had a divining rod which he directed should be cast into the water at his death. Upon touching the water it exploded with a loud report like the casket of Kelpius.

Upon the refusal of Sehlee to lead the Fraternity, Conrad Mathai was elected Majister. "Under his leadership the Community consisted merely of a number of devout Ascetics who lived by themselves in cabins or huts on the banks of the Wissahickon." Mathai died in 1748.

Doctor Christopher Witt, the last of the Pietists, died in Germantown in 1765. His re-

<sup>1</sup> Julius F. Sachse, "German Pietists of Pennsylvania," page 247.

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Genealogy of the Levering Family."



mains were laid in a plain unvarnished coffin, in the shavings made in building the coffin, it being the superstition that if a shaving from a coffin found its way into a house, death would result in the near future.

Thus ended the career of an institution, taken lightly by some and seriously by others. The queer practices and odd cures introduced by them, lived for generations among the German families of Roxborough and Germantown, while the name and sincerity of John Kelpius is venerated to this day.

In 1848 sixteen acres of the ground, occupied by the Pietists were purchased by Mr. Evan Prowattain, a merchant of Philadelphia,<sup>1</sup> from John Righter, son of Daniel & Phoebe Righter. Mr. Prowattain built the large house along Hermit Lane, in which Major Martin now lives, and appropriately named it "The Hermitage."

Half way down the hill from the house, is Kelpius' cave. In recent years the roof of this cave had fallen in and had otherwise become so delapidated, that, in 1925, the Fairmount Park Commission had it restored to its supposed original condition.

On the hill above the cave, at the foot of a dogwood tree was Kelpius' spring. When the cave was rebuilt, a pipe was installed to conduct the water from the ancient spring to a fountain at the rear of the cave.

Still farther up the hill, above the cave, stands one of the log cabins. It is still in a good state of preservation, although it has been plastered and has had a second story clap board addition built over it, thus concealing its identity as a log cabin. However, on close inspection, the logs can be seen overlapping each other at the corners. It was in this cabin that Mathai lived for forty years until his death.

That part of the Vickeris tract east of the Wissahickon containing about 160 acres was settled by William Rittinghousen (Rittenhouse). It was here, on Paper Mill run, which empties into the Wissahickon, that the first paper mill in the middle colonies was built in 1690 by Wm. Rittenhouse. He came from Brouh, Germany in 1687 and was a Menonite

preacher. His family had long followed paper making in the old country. He purchased this ground from Vickeris in 1741, with the right and privilege to "Hawk, Hunt, Fish and Fowl." This privilege appears in several of the patents and in some of the early deeds, indicating that game was plentiful in this vicinity in the early days.

John F. Watson, the Annalist says: "Anthony Johnson who died in 1823, aged 78, saw when a lad, a large bear come across the road, from Chews' ground, then a wood. He had seen abundance of wild turkeys.

"After James Logan's house was built in 1728, a bear of large size came and leaped over the fence.

"About fifty years ago<sup>1</sup> a flock of six wild turkeys came to Enoch Rittenhouse' mill on Wissahickon and remained thereabout till his family shot the whole of them.

"In 1721 a bear was killed in Germantown and was so published and two more near to Philadelphia."

In 1741, Peter and Michael Righter purchased 77 and 71½ acres respectively of the Vickeris tract. Peter Righter or Richter was originally connected with the Pietists.<sup>2</sup> He was the Apotheker who held the secret of the remedy, known as the "Gold Tincture" or "Elixir Dulcis"<sup>3</sup> Peter Righter was one of those who broke the vows of celibacy, and married. Michael was Peter's third son.

Peter built a stone house on the lower Ridge just above the eastern end of Pencoyd bridge.<sup>4</sup> It was torn down a few years ago. In 1741 he obtained a patent from John, Thomas and Richard Penn to operate a ferry across the river at this point, "for seven years, forbidding any other ferry to be erected within two miles." The rope of the ferry was attached to a tree, on the other side of the river, which stood on ground owned by Thomas David, who leased a small

<sup>1</sup> These notes were written in 1855.

<sup>2</sup> Julius F. Sachse, "German Pietists in Pennsylvania," page 207.

<sup>3</sup> Julius F. Sachse, "German Pietists in Pennsylvania," page 111.

<sup>4</sup> In this house Hon. Horatio Gates Jones was born, Jan. 9, 1822, the son of Rev. Horatio Gates and Deborah (Levering) Jones. He was an honored and respected citizen of Roxborough and a State Senator from the 4th district from 1874 to 1882. He was a prolific writer. In 1859 he published "Historic Notes of Olden Times" in the "Manayunk Star" He also compiled a "Genealogy of the Levering Family" and a "History of Roxborough Baptist Church." He died March 14, 1893. Rev. H. G. Jones' first wife was Esther Righter, the grand daughter of Peter Righter.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book AWM 73, page 46.

strip of ground on which the tree stood to Peter Righter. The rent reserved was "one ear of Indian corn to be paid yearly on the last day of October."<sup>1</sup> He also had a shad fishery on the banks of the Schuylkill. He willed this fishery to his sons Peter and John in 1776.<sup>2</sup>

Matthew Houlgate (Holgate) purchased 80 acres of the Vickeris tract extending from a short distance below Salaignac Street to Hermit Lane and from the Schuylkill River to Wissahickon Creek. The title is not on record but was probably bought about 1698, at the same time that he purchased another tract a little further up the Ridge, about which we shall learn later.

Matthew Holgaet was also a member of the Pietistic Community or intimately connected with it<sup>3</sup> and was also one of those who broke away and married. He got into financial difficulty and his lands were confiscated. This 80 acres was purchased by Peter Righter from the sheriff in 1728. In the same year Peter Righter sold three acres of this ground to his son Bartholomew.<sup>4</sup>

In 1741 he sold the remaining 77 acres to his third son Michael.<sup>5</sup> Thus in 1741 Michael Righter became the owner of 151½ acres which he retained until his death in 1786. Hermit Lane ran through this tract and the site of the Community of the "Hermits of the Ridge" was within its bounds.

In 1746 Michael built the house where the Ridge Road and Righter Street meet and which later became the "Plow Tavern," and still later the Roxborough Poor House. This house still stands and is now owned and occupied by Mr. John Heller.

In his will, Michael directed that three of his sons, George, Michael and John choose "three reputable freeholders" to divide his money and property among his children and grand children, whereupon his sons chose Matthew Holget (Holgate), Daniel Thomas and Anthony Cook,<sup>6</sup> who in 1787 divided the property into eleven parts or lots. In this division Hermit

Lane is mentioned as "a lane dividing" some of these lots.<sup>1</sup>

Daniel Righter was given Lots Nos. 4 and 9. Lot No. 9 contained Kelpius Cave and the log cabin nearby. Daniel married Phoebe Starn, a daughter of the first Joseph Starn. Daniel and Phoebe lived in the log cabin. Daniel died in 1818 and Phoebe continued to live there.

Edward Strahan in "A Century After," published in 1876, says: "The cabin was occupied by Mistress Phoebe Righter, a widow, who took in washing, and who died some thirty years ago, over ninety years of age." This may be overdrawn, as it is a question whether there was any washing to be "taken in" at such an early date.

Lot No. 10, extending from the Ridge Road to the river and from Hermit Lane to a short distance above Salaignac Street, was given to John Righter and lot No. 11, from Ridge Road to the River and from a short distance above Salaignac Street to a short distance below, was given to Michael Righter.

On the west side of the Ridge between Hermit Lane and Salaignac Street, until a few years ago, there was a deep gulley in which was a spring under a rock. According to the deed there were two springs in the gulley and a cartway ran past the springs, down through the gulley from Ridge Road and Hermit Lane to the River.

Water was a scarce article in the uplands in the early days, so that when a lot containing a spring or a brook was sold, provisions were made in the deed restricting the use of the water. So it was with these two lots. Michael was given the privilege of drawing water from the spring on lot No. 10 for forty-eight hours, "at one time and no more." Then John was given his turn and so on. Michael was given permission to enter lot No. 10 "at any time there may be occasion to dig ditches to convey the water from said springs to lot No. 11, but with as little injury as may be to said lot No. 10." Michael was also given "the free and uninterrupted use" of the cart road, "at all times, passing and repassing" providing he "shut and secure the bars, if any there be."

<sup>1</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historic Notes."

<sup>2</sup> Will Book Q, page 240.

<sup>3</sup> Julius F. Sachse, "German Pietists in Pennsylvania."

<sup>4</sup> Deed Book ADB 142, page 488.

<sup>5</sup> Deed Book No. 9, page 367.

<sup>6</sup> Anthony Cook was the great-grandson of Richard Townsend who with Joshua Tittery built the "Wissahickon Mill" in 1686.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book D 18, page 632.



In 1741 Jacob Levering, son of the pioneer Wigard Levering, purchased the balance of the Vickeris tract containing 77 acres "and allowance of 6 acres for roads and highways." In 1744 Jacob conveyed to his son Wickard one-half of that portion of this tract lying east of the Ridge, containing  $23\frac{3}{4}$  acres.<sup>1</sup> Wickard built a house on it which still stands and bears the date stone "W. L. 1743." It is now owned and occupied by Dr. Wm. T. Morton.

In 1750 Jacob and his wife Alice granted the other half of that portion east of the Ridge to their son Abraham "for and in consideration of the natural love and affection which they have and do bear for and towards their son Abraham and for his better advancement and preferment in the world."<sup>2</sup> Abraham built a house on this ground, which still stands on the east side of Ridge above Seville St. but which has since been divided into two houses.

In 1753 Jacob conveyed to another son, Jacob, Jr., saddle-tree maker, that part of this tract on the west side of the Ridge containing 41 acres 40 perches.<sup>3</sup> Jacob, Jr., built a house on this ground which still stands just above Seville Street.

#### JOHN JENNETT'S TRACT:

The next tract was patented to John Jennett. He purchased it in 1683. This tract contained 200 acres and extended from Markle Street to Pennsdale. Jennett became a resident of Philadelphia and was a tailor by trade. In 1698 he sold this 200 acres to Matthew Houlgate, of whom we have previously learned. He, Matthew Houlgate, built the first Fulling Mill along the Wissahickon on this tract. This mill was the second one built along the Creek and stood on the west side of the Creek about a hundred yards below Walnut Lane bridge.

In 1703 Holget sold that part east of the Wissahickon containing 54 acres to Claus Rittinghausen (Rittenhouse).<sup>4</sup> In this deed a certain direction is given as "North West by North, in a former conveyance erroneously called

North West by West." The difference between these directions being  $22\frac{1}{2}$  degrees.

"On the eighteenth day of August 1763, in the third year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain" this 54 acres was conveyed by Claus Rittenhouse's son William to Jacob Rittenhouse. The deed for this conveyance was not recorded until 1873 or 110 years after.

In 1720 Matthew Houlgate granted that part between the Ridge and the Wissahickon, from Markle to Pennsdale Street, containing 100 acres, to his son, Matthew, Jr. In this deed he is described as "Matthew Houlgate of Roxbury Township, Fuller." St. Timothy's Hospital is situated on this portion and Walnut Lane runs through it.

About 1750 Matthew Holgate Junior, built a large house on this tract, at the intersection of Walnut Lane and old Rittenhouse Lane. This lane, which joined the creek at Lotus Inn, was abandoned when Walnut Lane was built and the house was torn down about 1915. It was a venerable old house with a long one story kitchen wing and a pent eave around the main house at the eave line of the kitchen wing roof. In 1838 it came into possession of George Markle<sup>1</sup> and for many years was known as the Markle House.

In 1762 Matthew Houlgate, Jr., conveyed the Fulling Mill and Mill land to his son John.<sup>2</sup> In this deed a certain direction is given as "South  $62\frac{1}{2}$  degrees West, anciently called west south west." West South West is actually  $67\frac{1}{2}$  degrees west of south, a difference of 5 degrees.

John Holgate had five sons—Matthew, Samuel, John, Cornelius and William. Three of whom served in the Pennsylvania Militia during the Revolution. It was Matthew who, as mentioned in the last chapter, was Lieutenant Colonel of the Seventh Battalion of the Philadelphia Militia and who after the war became Judge of the Court of Common Pleas.

As before mentioned, the original Matthew Holgate got into financial difficulties and his

<sup>1</sup> Deed not on record but recited in Book D 10-294.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book G12, page 469.

<sup>3</sup> Deed Book H5, page 287.

<sup>4</sup> Deed Book FTW 8, page 462.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book SHF 25, page 236.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book H 15, page 445.

property was sold in 1728. Eighty acres, as before mentioned, were purchased by Peter Righter. Eighty and a half acres of the Jennett tract, west of the Ridge from Markle to Pennsdale Street, were purchased by Arnold Bamberger. John Wood bought Bamberger's purchase in 1736. St. Timothy's Church stands on this ground and Walnut Lane runs through it.

#### PHILIP TATEMAN'S TRACT:

The next tract on Holme's map contains the name of Philip Tateman. It should be Philip Th'Lehman. He was Wm. Penn's private secretary and sailed with him on the good ship "Welcome," arriving at New Castle, Delaware, on October 27th, 1682.<sup>1</sup> His name was Philip Theodore Lehman and by abbreviating his middle name to "Th" made his name appear as Th'Lehman. He afterward changed it to Lehman and settled in Bucks County.

Lehman purchased this tract in 1683. It contained 200 acres and extended from Pennsdale Street almost to Monastery Avenue. He sold this tract to John Jennett in 1685. Jennett sold the lower half from Pennsdale Street to Roxborough Avenue, containing 100 acres, to Gerhard Levering of Germantown, Joiner, brother of Wigard Levering, in 1692, who in 1730 sold it to Jacob Selzer of Philadelphia, Butcher. John Wood bought it from Jacob Selzer in 1739.

This in addition to the 80½ acres before mentioned which John Wood purchased from Adam Bamberger made him the possessor of 180 acres. When John Wood died it was found that the debts accumulated against his estate amounted to more than the cash on hand to pay them, therefore in 1755 his widow Ann and his brother Andrew were given letters of Administration by the court and his estate sold. So in 1756 "in the twenty-ninth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Second, by the Grace of God, King over Great Britain, etc." Andrew Wood and Ann Wood, the widow and "relict" of John Wood sold to Lawrence Smith 50½ acres, that part west of the Ridge where the Playground is now located, "together with dwelling house and barn stable."

This barn stood on the west side of the Ridge opposite St. Timothy's Hospital and was torn down a few years ago when St. Timothy's Church built its Rectory. The house stood a short distance back of the barn and was torn down forty years or more ago. Some of the older inhabitants may remember when Mr. Robert M. Carlisle or when Mr. George Campbell lived there.

Jennett sold the upper half of his tract, from Roxborough Avenue to Monastery Avenue, containing 100 acres, to Henry Frey of Germantown, Yeoman, in 1692. Henry Frey married Ann Catharine Levering, a daughter of Wigard Levering. Henry Frey came to Pennsylvania before William Penn.<sup>1</sup> He moved to Van Bebber Township, Montgomery County, and in 1729 sold that part between the Schuylkill and the Wissahickon, reputed to contain 95¾ acres, to John George Wood, father of John Wood, before mentioned.

John George Wood came from Germany. As before stated, his native name was Johann Yorick Holz,<sup>2</sup> which being Anglicized, is John George Wood. Later he dropped the John and went by the name of George Wood. By trade he was a "Taylor" (tailor).

In 1729 a petition was presented to the court, setting forth that there had been for many years a road leading from the Ridge over Holgate's Ford, at the Wissahickon—that the road was a great convenience to the people, but that it had been stopped of late to the great detriment of the neighborhood—and thereupon praying the court to appoint a jury to view and lay out a public road.

In June 1730, a jury reported in favor of a road, from the Ridge "on the land of George Wood by the line of land of Garrett Levering now of Jacob Selzer" running thence to Wissahickon Creek, across the same to Jacob Rinker's land and thence on the same to a road dividing Germantown from Roxborough.

The present Roxborough Avenue coincides exactly with George Wood's southern line and with Gerhard Levering's northern line:hence

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edward Armstrong's address before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania at Chester in 1851.

<sup>1</sup> Theodore Bean's "History of Montgomery County."

<sup>2</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Historic Notes."



this was the beginning of Roxborough Avenue. This lane went under various names according to who owned the mill on the Wissahickon at the foot of it.

In 1761 Edward Milner of Roxborough, Miller, purchased the Grist, Corn and Merchant Mill at the foot of the lane, from Joseph Gorgas of Roxborough Township, Miller, and Juliana, his wife, the mill having "three pair of stones under one roof," together with the "free right of a certain one perch wide road, from a road leading to said Mill and Roxborough line into the Germantown main road."<sup>1</sup>

The road then took the name of Milner's Lane. In 1775 Edward Milner sold the mill to Peter Care, who turned it into a paper mill. At this time the name changed to Care's Lane. Later in consecutive order it was called Longstreths, Garseds, Conrads, Weests and Kitchens Lane, as each of these men owned the mill.

The mill has gone. The lane, on the east side of the creek, still bears the name of the last owner of the mill, while on the west side it goes by the unromantic name of "Roxborough Avenue."

George Wood had two sons. John and Andrew, before mentioned, John was a tailor and Andrew was a cordwainer or shoemaker. In 1752 Andrew bought the hundred acres from Roxborough Avenue to Monastery Avenue before mentioned, from his father. He also bought an island, containing an acre of ground, in the Schuylkill River, along his shore, from Samuel Morris in 1770. A shad fishery was erected on this island which continued until Fairmount dam was built in 1822.

On the ground that he purchased from his father, Andrew Wood built a large stone house and barn, that stood at the corner of Ridge Road and Roxborough Avenue. It was in this barn that the massacre of the Virginia Troopers in 1777, described in the last chapter, occurred.

The upper part of Lehman's tract, east of the Wissahickon from Monastery Avenue to Roxborough Avenue, containing 20 acres, Henry Frey sold to George Jacobs in 1724. George Jacobs also bought the lower part, east of the

Wissahickon, from Roxborough Avenue to Pennsdale Street, containing 31 acres 30 perches. In 1729 he sold the whole 51 acres 30 perches to Jacob Rinker. Jacob had three daughters, two of whom were married and Mary who was unmarried. In 1767 he devised in his will "that the land be rented out, that my daughter Mary shall have one-half the rent . . . It is further my will that my daughter Mary shall have a free Room in the Second story and the Room on the North side joining the said Room; and freedom in the Kitchen in the lower Story and a Gardent next to the house and free fire Wood of my said land and freedom in the Cellar if she has a Mind to put something in it and all that liberty she shall have as long as she remains a single woman."<sup>1</sup>

Mary never married but because "Mom Rinker" of Revolutionary fame. She it was, who sat on "Mom Rinker's" rock where the statue of William Penn (Penn Toleration) now stands, constantly knitting. In the balls of yarn, she enclosed messages concerning the doings and whereabouts of the British, and dropped them to the valley below, where they were picked up by the Green Boys, who carried them to Continental Headquarters.

In 1815 as "the said Mary Rinker lately departed this life unmarried" John Weaver, of Pipe Creek Hundred, Frederick Co. Maryland and other heirs of Jacob Rinker sold the land to John Conrad.<sup>2</sup>

#### FRANCIS FINCHER'S TRACT:

The next tract is Fincher's. Francis Fincher purchased this tract in 1684. It contained 500 acres and extended from Monastery Avenue to Hipple Lane (Fountain Street).

In 1687 Fincher's widow Mary and son sold 200 acres of this tract to Thomas Hill of Philadelphia, Merchant,<sup>3</sup> who on the 1st day, 1st month 1691-2 sold it to Weckhart Levering of Germantown, "*together with a Mansion house and all other buildings, orchards, gardens, apple trees, fences and all appurtenances*" for 68 pounds.

<sup>1</sup> Will Book Q, page 183.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book MR 22, page 509.

<sup>3</sup> An exhaustive search was made to find who Thomas Hill was, but nothing could be found. His name does not appear in The Genealogy of the Hill family and in the conveyance of this ground is the only time it appears in the Deed books.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book I-3, page 317.

This is the earliest record of any settlement or habitation in Roxborough.

These 200 acres extended from Monastery Avenue approximately to Green Lane. In 1697 he purchased the remaining 300 acres of Fincher's tract, for 60 pounds, from Christopher Sibthorp, who in the meanwhile had married Fincher's widow. This purchase made Wigard Levering the possessor of 500 acres of land in the Roxborough tract, extending from a short distance below Monastery Avenue to Fountain Street.

#### WIGARD LEVERING:

Wigard Levering was born in the town of Gamen, in the principality of Westphalen, Germany, in 1648, the son of Rosier Levering.<sup>1</sup> He came to this country in 1685 with his wife, Magdalena Boeckers, and four children: Anna Catharina, William, Amelia and Sibella, ages  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $2\frac{1}{2}$ , 5 and 9 respectively; also his brother Gerhard. They were redemptioners, having sailed at the expense of the Frankford Company, promising to pay for their passage "as soon as he could," and in addition, borrowed 16 L 4 s from the Company to pay his debts before he sailed. Upon their arrival about August 1685, they reported to Francis Daniel Pastorius, general agent for the Company at Germantown. In October of the same year Wigard purchased 50 acres of land in Germantown.<sup>2</sup> He remained there until 1692, when he bought the ground in the Roxborough Tract from Thomas Hill.

Whether he occupied the house built by Thomas Hill, is not known, but it is natural to assume that he did. The house is supposed by some, to have stood east of the Ridge opposite Green Lane. This supposition is supported by the fact that in 1717 Wigard conveyed to his son William, the residue of his lands that remained unsold. East of the Ridge, opposite Green Lane, lies in this portion. Further it is strengthened by the will of William Levering, the son of Wigard, written in 1744, in which he devises to his son William "All that piece

of land . . . extending from the corner of his Orchard North West to the Upper corner of the same Orchard and thence continuing that Breadth East to Wissahickon."<sup>1</sup> The orchard mentioned may have been the original orchard that Thomas Hill had planted. Still further, by the will of William Levering, grand-son of Wigard, dated August 26, 1772, in which he devises to his son Enoch a one acre lot "to be laid out in a regular parallelogram, in such a manner as may not discommode *the old house* nearly adjoining, as also a road of twenty feet wide made for same through the burying ground field by the present ditch to the Main road together with the tan yard house."<sup>2</sup> The directions and distances of this one acre lot locate it east of the Ridge between Conarroe Street and Green Lane and according to the description the old house was close by.

When Wigard made the contract with the Frankford Company to transport him, his family and his brother, he obligated himself and his brother Gerhard to labor for a term of four years under the direction of Pastorius. For some reason or other they did not fulfill their obligations. They may have considered the charges extortionate. In any event, after repeated efforts by Pastorius to obtain payment, the case dragged on for fourteen years, when Wigard, to bring the matter to a head, sued the Company. In this he was shrewd also, for he hired "all the attorneys in the country" so that Pastorius could find none to defend him.

He won his suit and obtained judgment against the company for 32 L, 16 s. and 10 d. Pastorius appealed the case on the ground "a thing he thinks not so unheard of as that a Plaintiff should employ all the Lawyers to impede and hinder the Defendants to get any," also contending that Wigard had worked 500 days less than he should have done and Gerhard 163 days less. The Governor and Council granted the appeal and summoned Pastorius and Wigard to appear before them, each with a friend "that understood the German and the Dutch language." Whether the case was retried, and if so, what the outcome was, is not known.

<sup>1</sup> Horatio Gates Jones' "Genealogy of the Levering Family."

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book F-7, page 143.

<sup>1</sup> Will Book H, page 165.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book 49, page 74.



On the 7th of the 3rd month 1691, Wigard and his brother Gerhard with William and Cloes Rittinghuysen (Rittenhouse) "for the better securing of their estates, real and personal," became naturalized. The record states that "they have solemnly promised faith and allegiance to William and Mary and fidelity and lawful obedience to William Penn as Proprietary, it is declared and granted to them to be henceforth Freeman at Law, etc."

In Penn's "Conditions and Concessions," Section IV, he says, "That where any number of purchasers, whose numbers of acres amounts to five or ten thousand acres, desire to fit together in a lot or *township*, they shall have their lot or township cast together." In 1716 we find Wigard Levering conveying 85 acres of land to his second son Jacob. In the deed for this land the grantors are described as "Weechert Levering of *Roxborough Township*, Joiner, and Magdalena his wife." This is the first reference we have of it being called a Township.

The land that Wigard sold to Jacob comprised a large part of the present Manayunk and extended from the river to Fleming Street and from Levering Street to Leverington Avenue. The deed states, "As also free egress and regress to or from the hereby bargained tract through the said Weeckart and William's other land as ffar as Plymouth Road, Provided also that said Jacob Levering his heirs and assigns do fforever allow a passage or way through the herein purchased tract unto the s<sup>d</sup> William his heirs and assigns, so Nevertheless that it shall be lawful for the s<sup>d</sup> Jacob his heirs aforewritten to ffence in all the said tract leaving a gate of Bars or shut rails."

Jacob built the first house in Manayunk on the west side of Green Lane, just below Silverwood Street. The passage mentioned in the deed, was the original Green Lane and led from Jacob's house to Wigard's house, before mentioned, on the east side of the Ridge opposite Green Lane.

Nothing of Green Lane is found in the Road Dockets until 1769, when a petition was presented at the September session of Quarter Sessions Court stating that "Whereas for many

years past a Road hath been used over the Ford or Schuylkill leading from Plymouth Road at a lane near William Levering's passing over Land of Abraham Levering to said Ford and crossing the same to a Public Road near Anthony Levering's Mill. The utility whereof your petitioners & many others have had manifest experience. Which Road being only on sufferance renders the same subject to frequent removals, rendering it thereby sometimes difficult to pass and its Scite uncertain, whereby your petitioners and others are disappointed of the Benefit thereof and praying the Court would be pleased to appoint proper Persons to view the premises & lay out the said Road." <sup>1</sup>

Wigard sold 100 acres to John Linderman. The date is not on record as the deed was lost. Linderman died in 1720 and his heirs desiring in 1738 to sell the land applied to Wigard for another deed. Wigard gave them another one and charged them five pounds for it. Even this deed was not recorded until 1774. This ground extended from Gates to Fountain Street and from Wissahickon Creek to the river.

"On the fourteenth day of the month called June" 1701, Wigard sold to Peter Conrats of Philadelphia County, Yeoman, all that part of his tract east of Wissahickon Creek, containing 160 acres.

In 1717 Wigard conveyed to his older son William the residue of his lands, that remained unsold. Deducting the amounts, stated as sold, from 500 acres leaves 155 acres, but in reality amounted to about 224 acres because his original tract of 500 acres contained about 738. Even allowing six per cent. for roads, this was a large 500 acres.

On February 2nd, 1744-5 Wigard Levering died. His death was announced in "The Pennsylvania Gazette" as follows: "Last week died, not far from this city Mr. Wichart Levering, aged 109 years." For a long time the tradition of his great age was received as correct. However the agreement made with the Frankford Company to transport him and his family to Pennsylvania in March 1685, in which he gave his age as 36 or 37 proves that he was born in

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 420.

1648, in which case he was ninety seven years old when he died. Thus passed away the Patriarch and Founder of Roxborough, but instead of being "buried with his fathers" as were the patriarchs of old, he was buried in the land of his adoption, in the family burying ground which has since become Leverington Cemetery, although no stone marks his grave. He was survived by five children—William, Jacob, Katherine, Amelia and Sibella.

William had two sons—William and Benjamin. Jacob had seven sons—Abraham, Wigard, William, Jacob, Anthony, Benjamin and Septimus. The last was so named because he was the seventh son. Four of the seven lived beyond the age of sixty; one beyond seventy and two beyond eighty.

#### JAMES CLAYPOOLE'S TRACT:

The next Tract was James Claypoole's, purchased in 1684, containing 500 acres. It extended from Hipple Lane to Paoli Avenue. James Claypoole was a close friend of William Penn, one of his Commissioners and a member of the Council.

Wm. Penn writes in England in 1681 "Claypoole has himself bought 5000 acres, wants to go out and settle, but doubts and fears. He don't feel sure about the climate, the savages, the water, the vermin, reptiles, etc." Claypoole writes in 1682 "I have taken up resolutions to go next spring with my whole family to Pennsylvania, so have not sent my orders for a house for planting, but intend to do it when I do come. I have a hundred acres where our capital city is to be, upon the river near Schuylkill and Peter Cock."

James Claypoole's executors sold the tract from Hipple Lane to Paoli Avenue to Hugh Roberts of the Welsh tract<sup>1</sup> in 1695-6. Hugh Roberts conveyed 100 acres on the river end to his son Owen and in 1710 his estate conveyed the balance of 400 acres to George Evans, of Philadelphia, Yeoman. "On the third day of the month called August in the eighth year of the reign of Queen Ann over Great Britain 1709," George Evans conveyed to John Conrad all that

part of this tract east of the Wissahickon containing 82 acres.<sup>1</sup> In 1735 he sold 275 acres to Samuel Guldin of Roxborough Township, Gent., who in the same year conveyed it to Daniel Barndollar of Germantown Township, Yeoman. The western boundary of Barndollar's land was also the eastern boundary of the hundred acres, before mentioned as being conveyed by Hugh Roberts to his son Owen. This hundred acres in 1763 was conveyed to Jacob Amos of Roxborough, Weaver, by the estate of Walter Walters, of Haverford, Fuller.

In this deed it is recited that "Whereas the line, dividing said one hundred acres from the residue of above first mentioned five hundred acres, was not marked by any visible boundaries and some differences have arose touching said line, they the said Walter Walters and Jacob Amos and Daniel Bergendahler the purchaser of the next adjoining rest of five hundred acres, submitted their differences relating to said line to the end and determination of John Roberts, Surveyor, Thomas Livezey and Thomas Rose."

In 1760 Thomas Livezey of Roxberry Township, Miller, purchased 44½ acres along the west side of Wissahickon Creek from Daniel Barndollar. In 1766 Daniel conveyed the house now occupied by the Partenheimer store, above Fountain Street, and 95 acres of ground to his son-in-law Christopher Lentz.

Christopher Lentz died leaving a widow and nine children. In 1795 the court was petitioned by Christopher's son Jacob to divide this land among the heirs. It was the sheriff's duty to make the division and in order to do this he consulted certain "good and lawful men of the county" for advice. In this case he took with him to the premises Andrew Wood, William Levering, John Levering, David Davis, Lewis Smick, Godfrey Bockius, John Ridinger, David Merckle, John Bigony, Lawrence Miller, Cornellius Holget, Christopher Ozias, Jacob Lukens and Joseph Starn and they "did say that said tract and buildings could not be parted without spoiling them."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Merion, Radnor and Haverford.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book E-5, Vol. 7, page 318.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book D-77, page 453.



In 1709 George Evans sold 43¼ acres of the Claypoole tract to John Linderman. This land extended from Gates Street to Gorgas Creek and from the Ridge to Wissahickon Creek. John Henry Lindeman, son of John Lindeman, sold this to John Bald of Roxborough Township, Cordwainer, in 1738. In the same year, Linderman also sold 42 acres 70 perches of the 100 acres, his father had bought from Wigard Levering, to John Bald. This ground extended from Hermitage Street to Gates Street and from the Ridge to Wissahickon Creek.

In 1746 John Bald conveyed these two parcels of land to John Gorgas of Germantown, Skin-dresser. John Gorgas built the mill along Gorgas Creek. In 1773 he conveyed 63 acres 70 perches to his son John Gorgas Jr., Miller, who in 1810 built the old Gorgas Homestead on the east side of the Ridge, just above Gates Street, now occupied by the Roxborough Country Club. John Gorgas, Senior, died in 1781 and devised that "five reputable freeholders" be chosen to divide his lands, mills, etc., among his five sons and four youngest daughters—John, Benjamin, Jacob, George, Joseph, Catharine, Christiana, Sarah and Susannah. The "five reputable freeholders" chosen were Enoch Levering, Leonard Stoneburner, Winnard Nice, Jacob Engle and Christian Schneider.<sup>1</sup>

In the Barndollar tract one Julianna Somerlot sold a parcel of land to Philip Datz<sup>2</sup> and in the deed it is recited as "being the same lot or piece of land . . . by a certain indenture which hath been lost or mislaid and cannot be found, the date unknown."

#### SAMUEL BENNETT'S TRACT:

The next Tract was purchased by Samuel Bennett in 1684 and contained 246 acres. This tract extended from Paoli Avenue to a short distance above Harmon Road. In 1686 Bennett conveyed it to Robert Longshore, who conveyed it to Richard Townsend the following year.

Richard Townsend is the same that built the Wissahickon Mills with Joshua Tittery. He sold 100 acres of the river end of this tract to An-

thony Morris of Philadelphia, Merchant, in 1713. In 1724 we find him residing in Bristol Township and conveying 100 acres to his son-in-law Isaac Cook. The Deed reads "Now said, Townsend in consideration of the love, good will and fatherly affection which he hath for his loving daughter Hannah as also for five shillings paid by Isaac Cook of Germantown, Yeoman—Husband of said Hannah." In the same year he conveyed 70 acres to his other son-in-law John Bartlett of Dredhaven Crick, in Baltimore County, Blacksmith, husband of his daughter Mary. This deed contains the same endearing terms as the one to Isaac Cook.

In 1735 John Bartlett sold this 70 acres to William Gorsuch of Upper Providence, in Chester County. Isaac Cook purchased this 70 acres in 1745 and in 1760 sold to Thomas Livezey, Miller, that portion east of Wissahickon Creek from Livezey's Mill to the Devil's Pool.<sup>1</sup> In this deed it is recited of the 70 acres as "a certain tract of land in Roxborough Township reputed to be seventy acres but late found to be one hundred and two acres."

Isaac Cook had three sons—Isaac, Junior, Jacob and Richard. In 1747 he conveyed property along the Ridge, on the east and west sides to these three sons. The property now owned by Mr. Harmon Robinson, on the east side of the Ridge opposite Domino Lane, is part of the property conveyed to Jacob, which in 1765 was purchased by Joseph Stearn.

In 1768 the lot to the south of Joseph Stearn's lot came into the possession of Anthony Cook, Isaac's son, and in 1787 Anthony Cook sold part of it to Jonathan Taylor.

On Joseph Stearn's lot was a run of water and as with the spring, mentioned before, on Michael Righter's land, this run of water is mentioned in the deed for the land, conveyed by Anthony Cook to Jonathan Taylor, with particular instructions as to when and how the water should be drawn.

In this deed Jonathan Taylor is given the privilege of crossing Anthony Cook's land to draw water from the run on Joseph Starne's land, *three days in the week* for the purpose of

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book TG-327, page 549.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book IC-24, page 102.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book H-10, page 422.

watering meadow lands, from Monday morning at sunrise until sunrise the following Thursday morning "and no longer at any time or times hereafter forever." He was also given permission to cross Anthony Cook's land every Monday morning to dig ditches so that the water might run more freely "advancing no further on Anthony Cook's land than is absolutely necessary—and doing no more damage—than can possibly be avoided."<sup>1</sup>

Some years later a part of Jonathan Taylor's ground was sold and the privilege of using the spring was divided between the Grantee and the Grantor, so that one was to draw the water from sunrise on Monday until noon on Tuesday, while the other was to draw it from noon Tuesday until sunrise the following Thursday morning, "and no longer nor at any other time or times hereafter forever."

This brook still flows down through the golf links of the Green Valley Country Club, but the men whose names are mentioned in these deeds have long since passed away.

In those days pasture in the uplands was poor except where springs occurred. John F. Watson in a manuscript entitled "Germantown, Roxborough and Valley Forge" presented to Horatio Gates Jones says:

"It may justly surprise the present generation to have a little insight into the state of farming before the Revolution and before the introduction of *Clover & Plaster of Paris*. These were the things which enriched the cultivation and beautified the fields. It was first started about the year 1780 at Chestnut Hill by Abraham Rex and at Germantown by L. Stoneburner.

"It became a wonder to see men making grass in and about Germantown and Roxborough and hauling it home from upland fields. Everybody was delighted to see the effect of this new era of farming. The aged now can well remember the stirring interest which was everywhere excited by this important improvement. Before this time a farmer in Germantown or Roxborough would consider 100 acres of land as inadequate to provide his frugal living, unless he had also a good portion of natural meadow to

supply his stock. It soon came to be experienced that 50 acres of land well tilled produced enough to fill a barn of double the size before used.

"How they were perplexed for enough of natural meadow may be seen in all the original grants to the Swedes, giving them always in their allotments a proportion of natural vly (meadow)"<sup>1</sup>

#### CHARLES HARTFORD'S TRACT:

The next tract on Holmes map contains the name of Charles Hartford. It should be Harford. This tract contained 236 acres and extended from a short distance above Harmon Road to Wigard Avenue. It was purchased by Charles Harford of Bristol, England in 1685.

In later years it was called the "Irish Tract." In 1714 Thomas Wilson of Kings County, Ireland, bought it. Wilson died in 1734 and the ground descended from son to grand-son and then to his great-grand-son Robert Clibborn Wilson of Mt. Wilson, Kings County, Ireland, who in 1791 sold the whole tract to Leonard Dorsey of Philadelphia, Merchant and John Livezey of Roxborough Township, Miller. The ground by this time had expanded to 248 acres 37 perches. In 1795 Leonard Dorsey sold his half to Joseph Livezey of Roxborough, Miller.

In 1792 Godfrey Bockius and John Piles, who owned tracts of land along the river at the foot of Domino Lane, presented a petition to Quarter Sessions Court saying "they have enjoyed a road at sufferance through the land commonly called the Irish Tract into the Roxborough Road which road is now intended to be shut up whereby your petitioners will be prevented from having access to their land."<sup>2</sup> This was the forerunner of Domino Lane which in 1819 was laid out and confirmed as it runs now.<sup>3</sup>

Charles V. Hagner in his "Early History of Falls of Schuylkill" tells the following story of Domino Lane—"Nearly all the mills on the Wissahickon were actively employed in making flour and some of the proprietors were a jolly set, continually out on the road day and night

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book T H 12, page 457.

<sup>2</sup> Pennsylvania Historical Society.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 4, page 272.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 8, page 75.



picking up the grain that came in teams down the Ridge Road in large quantities.

"One of them had built a small store house on the Schuylkill shore above Flat Rock bridge<sup>1</sup> to take in grain coming down the river in boats, but the access to it was difficult and they petitioned for a new road. A jury was appointed, who along with some of these jolly fellows, went over the ground, after which they crossed over Flat Rock bridge to the little tavern<sup>2</sup> on the western side of the river, the 'Samson & Goliath' where they made a night of it, got hold of a set of dominoes, played nearly all night and had a regular spree, which I often heard refer to as the 'Domino Scrape' and they gave that name to the road."

#### RICHARD SNEE'S TRACT:

The next Tract on Holmes Map contained the name of Richard Snee. It should be Snead. Richard Snead of the city of Bristol, Great Britain, Linen Draper, purchased this tract in 1684. It contained 334 acres and extended from Wigard Avenue to Shawmont Avenue (formerly Green Tree Road). In 1709 Richards Snead sold this tract to Thomas Story.

Thomas Story married Ann Shippen,<sup>3</sup> daughter of Edward Shippen, the first Mayor of Philadelphia. James Logan, Penn's Secretary (afterward Chief Justice of Pennsylvania) was also a suitor for the lady's hand, but lost. Ann Shippen died in 1712, six years after marrying Thomas Story. After her death he disposed of his possessions in America and went back to England.<sup>4</sup>

In 1720 Thomas Story "late of Philadelphia, now of London, Gent." sold this tract to John Haddon of Roderick County of Kent, and Benjamin Kirtin, of London, Merchant, in trust for the Pennsylvania Land Company. These two gentlemen died and the trusteeship became vested in William Kirtin. In 1750, the trusteeship by Act of Parliament became vested in Thomas Hyam of London, Merchant, Thomas Reynolds of White Hart Court in Grace Church Street, London, Goldsmith, the only survivors

of the Pennsylvania Land Company, who in 1760 sold the upper half of that part west of the Ridge containing  $83\frac{3}{4}$  acres to Christopher Sower of Germantown, Printer.

On May 21, 1778, the Supreme Executive Council of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania issued a proclamation attainting certain men of high treason. Among them was Christopher Sower. His entire estate, including this parcel of land, was confiscated and sold. This parcel was sold Sept. 18, 1779 at the Court House in Philadelphia to Daniel Clymer for 17,610 L.<sup>1</sup>

In 1760 Thomas Hyam and others of the Pennsylvania Land Company sold the lower half of this tract west of the Ridge, containing  $74\frac{1}{2}$  acres to Christian Van Lashet, of Germantown, Shopkeeper, who in 1793 sold the  $74\frac{1}{2}$  acres to Daniel Pastorius of Germantown, Tanner. In the deed for this conveyance the directions are given "according to the present position of the magnetical needle."

In 1763 the survivors of the Pennsylvania Land Company had changed hands to John Fothergill, Doctor in Physick; Daniel Zachary, Gentleman; Thomas How, Goldsmith; Devereux Bonley, Watchmaker; Luke Hinde, Stationer; Richard How, Jacob Hagen, Sylvanus Grove and William Heron, Merchants—all of London. In this year they sold all that part of this tract east of the Ridge, containing  $179\frac{1}{4}$  acres to John Malcolm of Philadelphia, Sailmaker.

The Act of Parliament to appoint trustees to sell the lands of the Pennsylvania Land Company is recited in the deed for this ground to John Malcolm, and reads as follows: "Whereas by an Act of Parliament passed in the thirty third year of the Reign of the late King George the Second, entitled an Act for Vesting certain estates in the Province of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Maryland, belonging to the Proprietors of a Partnership commonly called the Pennsylvania Land Company of London, in Trustees to be sold for other purposes therein mentioned."

In 1764 John Malcolm sold this  $179\frac{1}{4}$  acres

<sup>1</sup> Flat Rock Bridge crossed the river at the foot of Domino Lane. It was built in 1810 and was washed away in a freshet Sept. 31, 1850. The abutment on the west side still stands at the upper end of the Phila. and Reading R. R. tunnel.

<sup>2</sup> This building still stands at the upper end of the tunnel.

<sup>3</sup> Elsie Willing Balch, "Descendants of Edward Shippen."

<sup>4</sup> Westcott, "Historic Mansions of Philadelphia," page 146.

<sup>1</sup> Penna. Archives, 6th Series, Vol. 12, page 912.

to Andrew Crawford of the Township of Plymouth, Yeoman. Andrew Crawford, in his will, devised this land to his son Hugh Crawford who in 1783 devised it to his four children Hugh Junior, Ann, Jane and Mary. In 1797 the court was petitioned to divide this land, whereupon the sheriff in making the division returned the following: ". . . I the sheriff do hereby certify that in persuance of . . . writ, taking with me John Huston, Peter Robeson, John Levering, Cornelius Holget, Joseph Starne, John Smith, George Righter, William Levering, Godfrey Bockius, David Davis, Henry Keeley, Richard Price, Michael Righter and Jonathan Penrose, *twelve good and lawful* men of my Bailiwick, by whom the truth of the matter might be better known. I the said sheriff in my proper person went to the Plantation or Tract of Land and Premises . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Hugh Jr. moved to Loudon County, Virginia and in 1805 sold his portion to Michael Levering Carpenter; David Moyer, Blacksmith; Peter Tarter, Yeoman; Samuel Minnick, Cooper; George Bartle and John and Joseph Livezey.

#### CHARLES JONES' TRACT:

The next Tract is that of Charles Jones. It contained 400 acres and extended from Shawmont Avenue to Ship Lane (Port Royal Avenue). Charles Jones Sen. and Charles Jones Jr. of Bristol, Great Britain purchased this tract in 1681. In 1711 Charles Jones Sr. conveyed it to Edward Shippen of Philadelphia, Merchant. As before mentioned, Edward Shippen was the first Mayor of Philadelphia in 1701. He was a prominent man among the colonies and was distinguished for three great things, "the biggest man, the biggest house and the biggest coach." He married three times; his third wife being Esther, the widow of Philip James.<sup>2</sup> Edward Shippen died in 1712 and the Roxborough tract together with other land owned by him descended to his third wife Esther who devised the Roxborough tract to her son William Shippen, who in 1750 willed it to his cousin, Samuel Powel of Philadelphia, Merchant, and mem-

ber of the Common Council in 1730.<sup>1</sup>

Over such a period of years it seemed that further confirmation was necessary, so on "December 20 in the year of our Lord 1735, the ninth year of the reign of King George the Second, over Great Britain and the eighteenth year of the Proprietary Government" John, Thomas and Richard Penn granted Samuel Powel a new Patent.<sup>2</sup>

Samuel Powel, in 1747, willed this 400 acres "unto the child wherewith his wife was ensient if it be a son, but if to be a daughter, then one moiety thereof to such a daughter and the other moiety to his son Samuel Jr. and daughter Abigail.<sup>3</sup> The child proved to be a daughter and they named her Sarah, so that Sarah was given one half and Samuel and Abigail each a quarter of the 400 acres. Sarah married Joseph Potts of Whitemarsh Township, Yeoman, and Abigail married William Griffiths.

Samuel Powel Jr. was also a man of prominence, being Justice of Common Pleas and Quarter Sessions Court and chosen Mayor in 1775, being the last Mayor of Philadelphia under the dominion of England and the Charter of 1701. After the Revolution a new Charter was given by the Legislature and he was again chosen Mayor in 1789, being known as the "Patriot Mayor."<sup>4</sup> He was also Speaker of the Pennsylvania Senate in 1792. He married Elizabeth Willing, the great-grand-daughter of Edward Shippen and the daughter of Charles Willing, Mayor of Philadelphia in 1748 and again in 1754.<sup>5</sup>

After considerable litigation it was finally agreed in 1768 that Sarah should be given that half east of the Ridge and Samuel and Abigail divide that half to the west.

Abigail conveyed her share to Samuel, whose widow Elizabeth in 1795 sold the entire 200 acres west of the Ridge to Daniel Pastorius of Germantown, Tanner, great-grand-son of Francis Daniel Pastorius.

In 1762 "divers inhabitants of Whitemarsh,

<sup>1</sup> Supreme Court, Sheriffs Deed Book No. 1, page 44.

<sup>2</sup> "Descendants of Edward Shippen," by Elise Willing Balch.

<sup>1</sup> Hare-Powel Family, by Robert Johnson Hare-Powel, page 197.

<sup>2</sup> Exemplification Record No. 2, page 421.

<sup>3</sup> Deed Book I-5, page 82.

<sup>4</sup> Hare-Powel Family, Robert Johnson Hare-Powel, page 197.

<sup>5</sup> Descendants of Edward Shippen, Elise Willing Balch, page 90.



Springfield and Roxborough" petitioned Quarter Sessions Court for a road from Port Royal Avenue, west of the Ridge, "through the lands of Samuel Powel to the line of John Martin and others, thence to Henry Katz's paper mill" continuing onto Spring Mill, also for another road branching from this road "leading down to Schuylkill between the lands of Jacob Hagy and John Staneland and thence along said river to Reesop Edwards Ford."<sup>1</sup>

In 1771 a petition for this road was read, from Jacob Hagy himself, of Whitemarsh, asking "for a Road to be laid out from his mill to the public road leading from Barren Hill Church to the place at Schuylkill formerly called Rees Pattards Ford" also for another road from his mill "through the lands of Henry Kurtz, John Dickinson (late Norris's) John Lynn and John Martin . . . thence through Samuel Powell's lands into the Roxborough (alias Manatawny) Road."<sup>2</sup>

The jury reported they had laid out a road from a "Road leading from Barren Hill Church to Rees ap Edwards Ford" to Jacob Hagy's grist mill and on to County line, continuing through the land of John Lynn and John Martin and others "to a Road commonly called Christopher Robin's Road, thence along said road . . . to the Great Manatawny Road."<sup>3</sup>

The Court confirmed this road and ordered it opened. In laying out this road it is found that the road "leading from Barren Hill Church to Rees ap Edwards ford" is the old Godley Road, opened in 1734 from Lower Merion to Whitemarsh, fording the river at Lafayette (Miquoin) and continuing on to Barren Hill. The road "commonly called Christopher Robin's Road" is Port Royal Avenue, west of the Ridge. The road as laid out coincides with the present Hagys Mill Road.

#### JONAS SMITH'S TRACT:

The next and last tract on Holme's map contains the name of Jonas Smith. This tract contained 500 acres and extended from Port Royal Avenue to the County Line. It was part of 6000

acres purchased by Charles Marshall & Company of which Jonas Smith was a member.

In the deed of Release of these 500 acres from the Company to Jonas Smith in 1685, it is recited that "Whereas William Penn of Worminghurst, in the County of Sussex, Esquire, by indenture of Lease and Release, bearing the respective dates, of the tenth and eleventh of August 1682 conveyed to Charles Marshall of Tytherton in the County of Wilts, Practitioner in Physick; Richard Whitpain, Citizen and Butcher, London; Thomas Cox, Citizen and Vintner, London; John Beesly of Dukes Place, London, Merchant; Jonas Smith of London, Merchant and Mary Davy of London, Spinster certain lands situate, lying and being in the Province of Pennsylvania."<sup>1</sup>

This release was not recorded until October 19th, 1785<sup>2</sup> almost a hundred years after. In order to prove the signatures on the release genuine, Lewis Weiss appeared before Plunket Fleeson, Esq. Judge of Court of Common Pleas and upon being sworn, said that "about twenty-five years ago" he had seen the Indenture and "that it was then and ever since judged by him and several other persons well vested in writings, to be an ancient Deed" and that "by his having seen the same names subscribed to several other ancient deeds and writings, the validity whereof there was never any controversy or question," he was "fully convinced and verily believed" that the names of the Grantors were respectively written by them.

Jonas Smith "became lawfully sized in his Demesne of said 500 acres and died so seized thereof and thereupon Thomas Moore of London and Johannah his wife (daughter and heir of said Jonas Smith) in and by certain indentures of April 23rd, last past (1715) did grant unto John Falconer and Andrew Hamilton all the aforesaid 500 acres."

In the same year Falconer and Hamilton sold the tract to Isaac Norris, a man of distinction among the Colonies, Mayor of Philadelphia in 1724 and the one after whom Norristown was named.

<sup>1</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 283.

<sup>2</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 3, page 462.

<sup>3</sup> Road Dockets, Vol. 4, page 6.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book D-13, page 513.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book D-13, page 501.

This deed was not recorded until 1734 and in order to prove the signatures genuine, Peter Evans, Esq. and Chas. Brockden, Gent., appeared before Thomas Lawrence, Esq. Justice of Peace "and being duly sworn upon the holy Evangelists of Almighty God, did depose and declare that they were present and did see the within named Andrew Hamilton and Gilbert Falconer seal and as their Deed deliver the within writing or conveyance."<sup>1</sup>

This was the largest 500 acre tract of the lot. Wigard Levering's tract was large but this one was larger. In 1731 Isaac Norris devised this tract to his widow Mary and children. In 1737 Mary Norris, "widow" and "relict" of Isaac Norris, late of Fairhill, within the Liberties of the City of Philadelphia, deceased," conveyed 250 acres to Bartholomew Righter of Roxborough Township, Cordwainer, for 325 L. Thus the Righters held the upper and lower ends of Roxborough Township while the Leverings held the middle. In 1745 Bartholomew Righter devised these 250 acres to his four sons—John, Jacob, Peter and Bartle.

"On the thirtieth of March in the sixteenth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Second by the Grace of God, King of Great Britain, France and Ireland" (1743) John Henry Schaub of Roxborough Township, Cordwainer, sold to Nicholas Rebint (Rapine) of Lower Merion Township, Weaver, 100 acres of this tract which he had purchased from Isaac Norris. The deed between Norris and Schaub is not on record but must have been about 1735.

Another 250 acres of this tract was sold to Chas. Gottfried Paleski of Plymouth Township, Esquire, by John Dickinson and Mary his wife, of Wilmington, New Castle Co., Delaware. Mary, the wife of John Dickinson was the great-grand-daughter of the original Isaac Norris. John Dickinson was a brilliant lawyer, a patriot, President of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania 1782 to 1785 and the author of the famous "Farmers Letters" which were influential in precipitating the Revolution.

In the first of these "Farmers" Letters" he says: "My dear countrymen. I am a farmer, set-

tled after a variety of fortunes, near the banks of the Delaware, in the province of Pennsylvania. I received a liberal education and have been engaged in the busy scenes of life; *but am now convinced that a man may be happy without the bustle with it.*"

140 acres of this tract was devised by George Martin to his son John in 1761, he having presumably purchased it from the Norris Estate, although the deed is not on record. In a deed for an adjacent tract in 1739, Martin's land is cited as "land of Thomas Potts." Neither the deed to Potts nor the deed to Martin can be found.

30 acres in the north west corner by the river, which contains the soap stone quarries, was purchased by John Standley (Staneland) prior to 1795. When he purchased it is not on record but it is cited as the northern boundary of Paleski's tract in that year. By descent it came into the possession of Standley's grand children John and Ann Simonson. In 1798 it was divided by the sheriff in a suit between Wm. White of Montgomery County, Minister of the Gospel and John Simonson. Beyond this date the trace is lost.

Casper Fight purchased 38 acres prior to 1739. The deed is unrecorded but in a deed to an adjacent tract is cited as "a tract of land belonging to Isaac Norris but now in the possession of Caspar Feight."

John Rudolph of Cresham in Germantown Township, Mason, purchased 38 acres in 1739. In 1746 he and Appolonia, his wife, sold this parcel to Daniel Barndollar. It is on this ground that the log cabin stands on Spring Street, west of the Ridge. This "messuage" is first mentioned in 1766 when Daniel Barndollar conveyed it to Jacob Sheets and Elizabeth his wife (daughter of said Daniel) so that the old log cabin was built sometime between 1746 and 1766. It is still inhabited and in good state of preservation, although it has been plastered over so as to be hardly recognized as a log cabin, except for its huge chimney.

It will therefore be seen that 846 acres of this 500 acre tract were sold. By actual measurement it contained 921 acres. Even allowing 6 per cent.

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book F-6, page 365.





Captain Jones' Home

Wicks 1/2/24.





for roads, Isaac Norris got more than his share.

#### THE OLD ROXBOROUGH SCHOOL-HOUSE:

A History of Roxborough would not be complete without at least a brief history of the old Roxborough School and Roxborough Baptist Church.

In 1748 William Levering the grand-son of Wigard Levering and his wife Hannah, conveyed 20 perches of land to seven trustees—Michael Righter, Peter Righter, Abraham Levering, Wickard Levering, Daniel Bargendole (Barndollar), John Gruber and John Houlgate,<sup>1</sup> "for and in consideration of the love and regard they have and bear for the public good in having a school kept in their neighborhood". This parcel of ground was situated where Levering School now stands at the corner of Ridge Road and Monastery Avenue. In the same year a one story building was erected. Among its first teachers were the Misses Broderick and Sefton and Mathias Maris, a nephew of the founder. In 1771 "on many years experience the lot is found to be too small to accommodate said School for Remedying whereof and encouraging said school" William Levering conveyed 10 perches more.<sup>2</sup> At the same time Andrew Wood conveyed 10 perches "excepting and always reserving unto said Andrew Wood his heirs and assigns forever the privilege of sending his and their children to said School in above mentioned lot when they please without the interruption of any of the said company their heirs or assigns."<sup>3</sup> Being the only public building in the Township it served not only for School purposes but for public meetings, elections and religious purposes. In 1776 an enthusiastic patriotic meeting was held there to secure volunteers for the Continental Army. In 1795 the building was enlarged by an additional story and back building. In 1804 Abraham Levering, one of the original seven trustees granted an additional quarter acre of ground.<sup>4</sup>

At this time the trustees were Michael Righter, Yeoman; Christopher Wunder, Vic-tualler; Cornelius Holget, Yeoman; Andrew

Wood, Cordwainer; Anthony Levering, Yeoman; Joseph Starne, Farmer; William Levering, Yeoman; Lewis Smick, Wheelwright; John Tibben, Weaver; John Hoffman, Wheelwright; John Smith, Wheelwright; John K. Duy, Storekeeper; Godfrey Bockius, Storekeeper; John Bigony, Cooper; David Davis, Farmer; Samuel Starne, House Carpenter; Benjamin Carpenter, Carpenter; Charles Carpenter, Cordwainer; Valentine Smith, Cooper; Christopher Ozias, Hozier; Michael Levering, Carpenter; Joseph Levering, Yeoman; Aaron Levering, Blacksmith; Thomas Levering, Blacksmith; Nathan Levering, Innholder; John Levering, Carpenter; Abraham Rittenhouse, Miller; John Davis, Storekeeper.

In 1854 the school house was in a badly dilapidated condition and the following year was unroofed and badly damaged by a tornado. Until 1847 it was known as the "Roxborough Primary" but in that year was changed to the "Levering Primary" in honor of the founder. In 1857 the property was vested in the City of Philadelphia and a new building was built which served until 1895 when the present structure was erected.

#### THE ROXBOROUGH BAPTIST CHURCH:

In 1754<sup>1</sup> a few Baptists in Roxborough invited Rev. Peter P. Van Horn to preach for them. The records of the Pennepek or Lower Dublin Church, the oldest Baptist Church in the Middle states, show that in 1762 Bro. George Eaton was called to supply that church, except on the third Sunday of each month, when he was engaged to preach at a place called the *Ridge near Germantown*, no doubt Roxborough.

At first the preaching was done in the School house. In 1789 it was decided to organize a church, at which time there were in the entire city and county of Philadelphia but two Baptist Churches—one at Pennepek or Lower Dublin and the other the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia. As all the Baptists in Roxborough were members of the Philadelphia Church, application was made by them for a letter of dismission to organize a church at Roxborough.

<sup>1</sup> Deed not on record but recited in Deed Book D-49, page 476.

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book D-49, page 476.

<sup>3</sup> Deed Book D-51, page 48.

<sup>4</sup> Deed Book EF-17, page 309.

<sup>1</sup> "History of Roxborough Baptist Church," by Horatio Gates Jones, in Roxborough Baptist Church Centennial Memorial, 1789-1889.

This letter having been secured, the following persons met at the Roxborough School house on August 23, 1789—Abraham Levering, Ann Levering, Catharine Staneland, John Levering, Hannah Levering, Anthony Levering, John Righter, Nathan Levering, Sarah Levering, Cornelius Holgate, Mary Holgate, Samuel Levering, Rebecca Levering, Hannah Coulston, Sarah Mathias, Mary Levering, John Howell, Elizabeth Howell, George Sinn, Margaret Sinn, Dorothy Sinn, Wickard Jacoby, Michael Conrad, Jane Conrad, Elizabeth Yerkes, Charles Nice, Sarah Stearn (Starne), William Holgate, Mary Holgate, Sarah Levering, Sarah Lobb and Mary Stout.

Of this old guard, the first one to pass on was John Righter in 1790 and the last one, Sarah Starn (daughter of the first Joseph Starn) who married John Gorgas. She died in her 91st year in 1862.

About 1792 it was decided to build a meeting house. Nathan Levering, Innholder, and his wife Sarah gave the ground near and in front of the old Roxborough burial ground, together with the right of a 14 ft. wide lane from the lot to the Ridge. The deed is dated October 19, 1793, and after naming the trustees says "All members of the Baptist Church in Roxborough Township, holding the same faith and Doctrine as is set forth in the Printed Confession of faith adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, September 25, 1742."<sup>1</sup> The building committee appointed consisted of Bros. Abraham Levering, Nathan Levering, John Levering and Charles Nice.

Among those who contributed to the erection

of the house, but were not members, were Peter and Jonathan Robeson and Thomas Livezey and sons (who were Quakers), Gov. Thomas Mifflin, Wm. Smith, D. D. Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, Hon. Plunkett Fleeason (father of Rev. Thomas Fleeason), F. A. Muhlenberg and David Rittenhouse.

The building stood back of the present one, on a knoll overlooking the Wissahickon valley. In 1830 it was destroyed by fire and rebuilt the same year. In 1868 the meeting house was found to be inadequate and a new and larger one was built on the site of the old one. In 1873 this building was much injured by fire and three years later burned down completely.

The present church was built in 1877. It was considerably altered and enlarged in 1927. Its spire rises 175 feet from the ground. Though crude in detail it is as graceful as any spire in the Country. It serves as a landmark from far and near.

Standing on the outskirts of Cynwyd or Bala, looking across the Schuylkill Valley or at Chestnut Hill across the Wissahickon Valley, a stranger approaches you and says "What spire is that, away over there?" Your heart swells with pride and you answer "Ah, that's the spire of the old Roxborough Baptist Church! That's where I live!"

No more fitting words could be found to close this book than those of Hon. James M. Beck, former U. S. Solicitor General, in his address at the 150th Anniversary of the Carpenters Company at Philadelphia in 1926—"We have a great heritage. Let us pass on to posterity the heritage of a noble dead!"

<sup>1</sup> Deed Book D-39, page 418.





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<sup>1</sup> Deed Book D-39, page 418.



# ROXBOROUGH TRACTS BOUGHT BY THE FIRST PURCHASERS

SHOWING THE

MAP





1001 1002 1003 1004 1005 1006 1007 1008 1009 1010 1011 1012 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024 1025 1026 1027 1028 1029 1030 1031 1032 1033 1034 1035 1036 1037 1038 1039 1040 1041 1042 1043 1044 1045 1046 1047 1048 1049 1050 1051 1052 1053 1054 1055 1056 1057 1058 1059 1060 1061 1062 1063 1064 1065 1066 1067 1068 1069 1070 1071 1072 1073 1074 1075 1076 1077 1078 1079 1080 1081 1082 1083 1084 1085 1086 1087 1088 1089 1090 1091 1092 1093 1094 1095 1096 1097 1098 1099 1100 1101 1102 1103 1104 1105 1106 1107 1108 1109 1110 1111 1112 1113 1114 1115 1116 1117 1118 1119 1120 1121 1122 1123 1124 1125 1126 1127 1128 1129 1130 1131 1132 1133 1134 1135 1136 1137 1138 1139 1140 1141 1142 1143 1144 1145 1146 1147 1148 1149 1150 1151 1152 1153 1154 1155 1156 1157 1158 1159 1160 1161 1162 1163 1164 1165 1166 1167 1168 1169 1170 1171 1172 1173 1174 1175 1176 1177 1178 1179 1180 1181 1182 1183 1184 1185 1186 1187 1188 1189 1190 1191 1192 1193 1194 1195 1196 1197 1198 1199 1200 1201 1202 1203 1204 1205 1206 1207 1208 1209 1210 1211 1212 1213 1214 1215 1216 1217 1218 1219 1220 1221 1222 1223 1224 1225 1226 1227 1228 1229 1230 1231 1232 1233 1234 1235 1236 1237 1238 1239 1240 1241 1242 1243 1244 1245 1246 1247 1248 1249 1250 1251 1252 1253 1254 1255 1256 1257 1258 1259 1260 1261 1262 1263 1264 1265 1266 1267 1268 1269 1270 1271 1272 1273 1274 1275 1276 1277 1278 1279 1280 1281 1282 1283 1284 1285 1286 1287 1288 1289 1290 1291 1292 1293 1294 1295 1296 1297 1298 1299 1300 1301 1302 1303 1304 1305 1306 1307 1308 1309 1310 1311 1312 1313 1314 1315 1316 1317 1318 1319 1320 1321 1322 1323 1324 1325 1326 1327 1328 1329 1330 1331 1332 1333 1334 1335 1336 1337 1338 1339 1340 1341 1342 1343 1344 1345 1346 1347 1348 1349 1350 1351 1352 1353 1354 1355 1356 1357 1358 1359 1360 1361 1362 1363 1364 1365 1366 1367 1368 1369 1370 1371 1372 1373 1374 1375 1376 1377 1378 1379 1380 1381 1382 1383 1384 1385 1386 1387 1388 1389 1390 1391 1392 1393 1394 1395 1396 1397 1398 1399 1400 1401 1402 1403 1404 1405 1406 1407 1408 1409 1410 1411 1412 1413 1414 1415 1416 1417 1418 1419 1420 1421 1422 1423 1424 1425 1426 1427 1428 1429 1430 1431 1432 1433 1434 1435 1436 1437 1438 1439 1440 1441 1442 1443 1444 1445 1446 1447 1448 1449 1450 1451 1452 1453 1454 1455 1456 1457 1458 1459 1460 1461 1462 1463 1464 1465 1466 1467 1468 1469 1470 1471 1472 1473 1474 1475 1476 1477 1478 1479 1480 1481 1482 1483 1484 1485 1486 1487 1488 1489 1490 1491 1492 1493 1494 1495 1496 1497 1498 1499 1500 1501 1502 1503 1504 1505 1506 1507 1508 1509 1510 1511 1512 1513 1514 1515 1516 1517 1518 1519 1520 1521 1522 1523 1524 1525 1526 1527 1528 1529 1530 1531 1532 1533 1534 1535 1536 1537 1538 1539 1540 1541 1542 1543 1544 1545 1546 1547 1548 1549 1550 1551 1552 1553 1554 1555 1556 1557 1558 1559 1560 1561 1562 1563 1564 1565 1566 1567 1568 1569 1570 1571 1572 1573 1574 1575 1576 1577 1578 1579 1580 1581 1582 1583 1584 1585 1586 1587 1588 1589 1590 1591 1592 1593 1594 1595 1596 1597 1598 1599 1600 1601 1602 1603 1604 1605 1606 1607 1608 1609 1610 1611 1612 1613 1614 1615 1616 1617 1618 1619 1620 1621 1622 1623 1624 1625 1626 1627 1628 1629 1630 1631 1632 1633 1634 1635 1636 1637 1638 1639 1640 1641 1642 1643 1644 1645 1646 1647 1648 1649 1650 1651 1652 1653 1654 1655 1656 1657 1658 1659 1660 1661 1662 1663 1664 1665 1666 1667 1668 1669 1670 1671 1672 1673 1674 1675 1676 1677 1678 1679 1680 1681 1682 1683 1684 1685 1686 1687 1688 1689 1690 1691 1692 1693 1694 1695 1696 1697 1698 1699 1700 1701 1702 1703 1704 1705 1706 1707 1708 1709 1710 1711 1712 1713 1714 1715 1716 1717 1718 1719 1720 1721 1722 1723 1724 1725 1726 1727 1728 1729 1730 1731 1732 1733 1734 1735 1736 1737 1738 1739 1740 1741 1742 1743 1744 1745 1746 1747 1748 1749 1750 1751 1752 1753 1754 1755 1756 1757 1758 1759 1760 1761 1762 1763 1764 1765 1766 1767 1768 1769 1770 1771 1772 1773 1774 1775 1776 1777 1778 1779 1780 1781 1782 1783 1784 1785 1786 1787 1788 1789 1790 1791 1792 1793 1794 1795 1796 1797 1798 1799 1800 1801 1802 1803 1804 1805 1806 1807 1808 1809 1810 1811 1812 1813 1814 1815 1816 1817 1818 1819

2





TITLES TO THE ROXBOROUGH TRACTS  
BOUGHT BY THE  
FIRST PURCHASERS  
AS SHOWN ON APPENDED PLAN NO. 1

1. Wm. Penn to Robert Turner—500 acres purchased 20th day 1st month—1683. Patented 29th day 5th month—1684. Exemplification Book. Vol. 1. Page 10. Robert Turner to Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders—1691. Deed Book H-16. Page 417.
2. Wm. Penn to Richard Vickeris—446 acres. Patent not on record, but recited in Deed Book F-T-W-103. Page 365 and G-1. Page 183, as being patented on or about April 15—1689.
3. Wm. Penn to John Jennett—200 acres—purchased 31st day 11 month 1683. Patented 27th day 9th month 1685. Exemplification Book. Vol. 1. Page 86. John Jennett to Matthew Houlgate 16th day, 3rd mo. 1698. Original deed not on record but recited in Deed Book H. Vol. 15. Page 266.
4. Wm. Penn to Philip Th'Lehman (Lehman) 200 acres, purchased 19th day 4th month 1683. Patented 2nd day, 9th month 1685. Exemplification Book. Vol. I. Page 86. Philip Lehman to John Jennett 9th day, 11th month 1685. Deed Book E. Vol. 5. Page 199, for 30 L.
5. Wm. Penn to Francis Fincher—500 acres—purchased 25th day, 2nd month 1684. Patented 12th day, 1st month 1686. This patent lost. Second patent granted Nov. 24, 1691. Exemplification Book 1. Page 256. Mary Fincher (widow of Francis Fincher) to Thomas Hill—200 acres—7th day, 2nd month 1687. Deed Book E-1. Vol. 5. Page 539, for 25 L. Thomas Hill to Weckhart Levering, same 200 acres. Feb. 29, 1691. Deed Book E-2. Vol. 5. Page 212, for 68 L. Christopher Sibthorp (husband of Francis Fincher's widow) to Wickert Levering 300 acres (balance of Fincher's 500 acres), 5th day, 5th month, July 1697 for 60 L. Exemplification Book 7. Page 122.
6. Wm. Penn to James Claypoole—500 acres—purchased 25th day, 2nd month, 1684. Patented 14th, 9th month, 1685. Exemplification Book 1. Page 107. Estate of James Claypoole to Hugh Roberts Nov. 30, 1695 for 40 L. Deed Book E-2. Vol. 5. Page 304.
7. Wm. Penn to Samuel Bennett—246 acres—purchased 28th, 8th month, 1684. Patented 31st, 3rd month, 1686. Samuel Bennett to Robert Longshore, 1st, 4th month, 1686. Deed Book E-1. Vol. 5. Page 527. Robert Longshore to Richard Townsend April 1st, 1687. Deed Book E-1. Vol. 5. Page 527.

8. Wm. Penn to Chas. Hartford (Harford) 236 acres—purchased 12th, 9th month, 1685. Patent not on record but recited in Exemplification Book 2. Page 106.  
Charles Harford to Thomas Wilson 1714. Deed not on record but recited in Deed Book D-29. Page 331.  
Ground descended to Wilson's great-grand-son, Robert Clibborn Wilson, in 1772. Deed Book D-29. Page 331.  
Robert Clibborn Wilson to Leonard Dorsey and John Livezey 1791. Deed Book D-29. Page 331. Leonard Dorsey sold his half to Joseph Livezey 1795. Deed Book D-48. Page 419.
9. Wm. Penn to Richard Snee (Snead)—334 acres, purchased 3rd, 1st month, 1684. Patented 22nd, 10th month, 1701. Exemplification Book 1. Page 714.  
Richard Snee to Thomas Story August 30, 1709. Deed Book H-11. Page 504.  
Thomas Story to John Haddon and Benjamin Kirton, December 23rd, 1720, Deed Book F-4. Page 266.  
By Act of Parliament, vested in Pennsylvania Land Company January 30, 1750.
10. Wm. Penn to Charles Jones, Sr., and Charles Jones, Jr.—400 acres—Sept. 26, 1681. Patent not on record but recited in Exemplification Book 2. Page 421.  
Charles Jones, Sr., to Edward Shippen Nov. 3, 1711. Exemplification Book 2. Page 421.  
Esther, widow of Edward Shippen, to William Shippen August 4, 1730. Exemplification Book 2. Page 421.  
William Shippen to Samuel Powell February 1, 1730. Exemplification Book 2. Page 421.
11. Wm. Penn to Charles Marshall & Company—500 acres, 10th day, 12th month, 1684. Patented 16th day, 12th month, 1684. Exemplification Book 1. Page 55.  
Charles Marshall & Company to Jonas Smith—May 16th, 1685. Deed Book D-13. Page 503.  
Jonas Smith to Thomas Moore and Johannah his wife (daughter of Jonas Smith) by will.  
Thomas Moore to John Falconer and Andrew Hamilton April 23, 1715. Deed Book D-13. Page 503.  
John Falconer and Andrew Hamilton to Isaac Norris April 23, 1715. Deed Book D-13. Page 503.





TITLES TO THE ROXBOROUGH TRACTS

PURCHASED BY

EARLY SETTLERS

AS SHOWN ON PLAN NO. 2

- 1A—Samuel Robeson and Charles Sanders to Joseph and Benjamin Morgan, 300 acres, 1696. Deed Book F-2. Page 404.
- 1B—Andrew Robeson, Executor of Samuel Robeson, to John Van Lear, 200 acres, 1702. Not recorded.
- 2A—Thomas Bishop Vickeris to Peter Righter, 77 acres, 1741. Deed Book G-2. Page 444.
- 2B—Thomas Bishop Vickeris to Michael Righter, 71½ acres, 1741. Deed Book FTW-103. Page 365.
- 2C—Thomas Bishop Vickeris to William Rittenhousen, 90 acres 140 perches, 1741. Deed Book H-17. Page 405.
- 2D—To Matthew Houlgate, 80 acres. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book ADB-142. Page 485.  
Sheriff to Peter Righter, 80 acres, 1728. Deed Book ADB-142. Page 485.  
Peter Righter to Michael Righter, 77 acres, 1741. Deed Book H-9. Page 367.
- 2E—To Matthew Houlgate, 80 acres. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book ADB-142. Page 485.  
Sheriff to Peter Righter, 80 acres, 1728. Deed Book ADB-142. Page 485.  
Peter Righter to Bartholomew Righter, 3 acres, 1728. Deed Book ADB-142. Page 488.
- 2F—To William Rittenhouse. Not recorded. Mentioned as "other ground of William Rittenhousen" in Deed Book H-17. Page 405.
- 2G—Thomas Bishop Vickeris to Jacob Levering, 77 acres, 1741, Deed Book H-1. Page 373.
- 2H—Thomas Bishop Vickeris to William Rittenhousen, 35 acres 98 perches, 1741. Deed Book H-17. Page 405.
- 3A—Sheriff from Matthew Houlgate, 80½ acres, to Arnold Bamberger, 1728. Deed Book H-4. Page 244.  
Arnold Bamberger to John Wood, 80½ acres, 1736. Deed Book H-4. Page 243.
- 3B—Matthew Houlgate to Matthew Houlgate, Jr., 100 acres, 1720. Deed Book H-15. Page 266.
- 3C—Matthew Holget to Claus Rittinghuysen, 54 acres, 1703. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book FTW-8. Page 482.
- 4A—John Jennett to Gerhard Levering, 100 acres, 1692. Deed Book H-7. Page 528.  
Gerhard Levering to Jacob Selzer, 95¾ acres, 1730. Deed Book H-7. Page 529.  
Jacob Selzer to John Wood, 95¾ acres, 1739. Deed Book H-7. Page 531.

- 4B—John Jennett to Henry Frey, 100 acres, 1692. Exemplification Book 6. Page 139.  
Henry Frey to John George Wood, 1729. Deed Book H-2. Page 214.  
John George Wood to Andrew Wood, 1752. Deed Book I-4. Page 103.
- 4C—Samuel Morris to Andrew Wood, 1 acre island, 1770. Deed Book EF-30.  
Page 563.
- 4D—John Jennett to Henry Frey, 100 acres, 1692. Exemplification Book 6, Page 139.  
Henry Frey to George Jacobs 20 acres, 1724. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed  
Book H-12. Page 321.  
Tracts 4D and 4E—51 acres 30 perches, conveyed by George Jacobs to Jacob  
Rinker 1729. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book MR-22. Page 509.
- 4E—John Jennett to Gerhard Levering, 100 acres, 1692. Deed Book H-7. Page 528.  
. . . to George Jacobs 31 acres 30 perches. Not recorded.  
Tracts 4D and 4E—51 acres 30 perches conveyed by George Jacobs to Jacob  
Rinker 1729. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book MR-22. Page 509.
- 5A—Wickert Levering to Jacob Levering, 85 acres, 1717. Deed Book E-7. Vol. 10.  
Page 249.
- 5B—Wickert Levering to William Levering, 155 acres, 1717. Deed Book F-4.  
Page 272.
- 5C—Wickert Levering to Peter Conrats, 160 acres, 1701. Deed Book E-5. Vol. 7.  
Page 317.
- 5D—Wickert Levering to John Linderman, 100 acres. Deed lost. A second deed  
given 1738. Deed Book I-12. Page 251.  
John Henry Linderman (son of John Linderman) to John Bald, 1738. Deed  
Book I-12. Page 248.  
John Bald to John Gorgas, that part east of Ridge, containing 42 acres, 70  
perches, 1746. Deed Book I-12. Page 312.  
John Bald to Benjamin Levering, that part west of Ridge containing 63 acres,  
62 perches, 1753. Commission Book A. Vol. 3. Page 440.
- 6A—Hugh Roberts to Owen Roberts, 100 acres, 1696. Deed Book E-7. Vol. 8.  
Page 447.  
Executors of Hugh Roberts Estate to John Cadwallader, 1713. Deed Book E-7.  
Vol. 8. Page 449.  
John Cadwallader to Owen Roberts, 1713.  
Owen Roberts to William Ranberry, 1714.  
William Ranberry to Walter Walters.  
Estate Walter Walters to Jacob Amos, 1763. Deed Book H-16. Page 492.
- 6B—Executors of Hugh Roberts' Estate to George Evans, 400 acres, 1705. Deed  
Book E-4. Vol. 7. Page 79.  
George Evans to Samuel Guldin, 1710.  
Samuel Guldin to Daniel Barndollar, 275 acres, 1735. Deed Book G-5.  
Page 445.
- 6C—Executors of Hugh Roberts' Estate to George Evans, 400 acres, 1705. Deed  
Book E-4. Vol. 7. Page 79.  
George Evans to John Linderman, 43¼ acres, 1709. Deed Book E-5. Vol. 7.  
Page 265.  
John Henry Linderman to John Bald, 1738. Deed Book I-12. Page 248.  
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- 6D—Executors of Hugh Roberts' Estate to George Evans, 400 acres, 1705. Deed  
Book E-4. Vol. 7. Page 79.  
George Evans to John Conrad, 82 acres, 1709. Deed Book E-5. Vol. 7. Page 318.



R I V E R

WAT ROCK DAM

W O N T G O W E R Y



- 4B—John Jennett to Henry Frey, 100 acres, 1692. Exemplification Book 6. Page 139.  
 Henry Frey to John George Wood, 1729. Deed Book H-2. Page 214.  
 John George Wood to Andrew Wood, 1752. Deed Book I-4. Page 103.
- 4C—Samuel Morris to Andrew Wood, 1 acre island, 1770. Deed Book EF-30.  
 Page 563.
- 4D—John Jennett to Henry Frey, 100 acres, 1692. Exemplification Book 6, Page 139.  
 Henry Frey to George Jacobs 20 acres, 1724. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed  
 Book H-12. Page 321.  
 Tracts 4D and 4E—51 acres 30 perches, conveyed by George Jacobs to Jacob  
 Rinker 1729. Not recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book MR-22. Page 509.
- 4E—John Jennett to Gerhard Levering, 100 acres, 1692. Deed Book H-7. Page 528.  
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- 6D—Executors of Hugh Roberts' Estate to George Evans, 400 acres, 1705. Deed  
 Book E-4. Vol. 7. Page 79.  
 George Evans to John Conrad, 82 acres, 1709. Deed Book E-5. Vol. 7. Page 318.







EARLY SETTLERS

BOUGHT BY THE

ROXBOROUGH TRACTS

SHOWING THE

MAP





- 7A—Richard Townsend to Anthony Morris, 100 acres, 1713. Deed Book E-7. Vol. 8.  
Page 339.
- 7B—Richard Townsend to Isaac Cook, 100 acres, 1724. Deed Book F-4. Page 285.
- 7C—Richard Townsend to John Bartlett, 70 acres, 1724. Deed Book F-4. Page 287.
- 8A—Robert Clibborn Wilson to Leonard Dorsey and John Livezey, 236 acres, 1714.  
Deed Book D-29. Page 331. Dorsey to Joseph Livezey his half in 1795.  
Deed Book D-48. Page 419.  
John and Joseph Livezey to David Davis, 177 acres, 111½ perches, 1800. Deed  
Book EF-1. Page 265.  
Sheriff to Sarah Johnson, 1827.  
Sarah Johnson to Jacob F. Heston, 1827. Deed Book GWR-23. Page 324.
- 8B—Remainder of 236 acres, which Robert Clibborn Wilson sold to Leonard Dorsey  
and John Livezey, 1791, and of which Leonard Dorsey sold his half to  
Joseph Livezey, 1795.
- 9A—Pennsylvania Land Company to Christopher Sower, 83¾ acres, 1760. Deed  
Book H-11. Page 610.
- 9B—Pennsylvania Land Company to Christian Van Lashet, 74½ acres, 1760. Deed  
Book H-11. Page 504.
- 9C—Pennsylvania Land Company to John Malcolm, 179¼ acres, 1763. Deed Book  
H-19. Page 202.  
John Malcolm to Andrew Crawford, 1764. Deed Book H-19. Page 213.  
Andrew Crawford to Hugh Crawford by will.  
Hugh Crawford to Ann, Jane, Mary and Hugh Crawford, Jr., by will, 1783.  
Recited in Deed Book EF-18. Page 613.
- 10A—Samuel Powell to Samuel, Jr., Abigail and Sarah Powell, 400 acres by will,  
1747. Deed Book I-5. Page 82.  
By agreement to Samuel Powell, Jr., and Abigail (Powell) Griffiths, 200 acres,  
1768. Deed Book I-5. Page 82.
- 10B—Samuel Powell to Samuel, Jr., Abigail and Sarah Powell, 400 acres by will,  
1747. Deed Book I-5. Page 82.  
By agreement to Sarah (Powell) Potts, 200 acres, 1768. Deed Book I-5. Page 82.
- 11A—Mary Norris (widow of Isaac Norris) to Bartholomew Richter (Righter), 250  
acres, 1737. Deed Book G-1. Page 205.
- 11B—Estate of Isaac Norris to John Henry Schaub, 100 acres prior to 1743. Not  
recorded. Mentioned in Deed Book H-6. Page 687.  
John Henry Schaub to Nicholas Rebint (Rapine), 100 acres, 1743. Deed Book  
H-6. Page 687.
- 11C—George Martin to his son John Martin by will. 140 A. 1761. Not recorded.  
Mentioned in Deed Book EF-22. Page 488.
- 11D—John Dickinson and wife, Mary (grand daughter of Isaac Norris) to Charles  
Gottfried Paleski, 250 acres, 1795. Deed Book D-55. Page 276.
- 11E—Norris Estate to John Standley, 30 acres, prior to 1795.  
Unrecorded. Descended to grand children John and Ann Simonson. Book  
EF-27. Page 206. Divided in 1798, as recorded in deed between William  
White and John White, 1799. Deed Book EF-3. Page 257.
- 11F—Norris Estate to Caspar Fight, 38 acres prior to 1739. Unrecorded. Mentioned  
in Deed Book IC-8. Page 526.
- 11G—Mary Norris (widow of Isaac Norris) to John Rudolph, 38 acres, 1739.  
Deed Book IC-8. Page 526.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> After the latest dates given for the above titles, the tracts were sub-divided and sold.





# MANAYUNK

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN



DAD MURPHY

AND

THE SCHUYLKILL NAVIGATION COMPANY



*Pen and Ink Illustrations*

BY THE AUTHOR

JOSÉPH STARNE MILES







*An Old World Setting in Manayunk*





# THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOWN

## CHAPTER I

Up in the Catskill Mountains, on the eastern edge of North Mountain, near the village of Catskill, New York, is a high precipice of solid rock, with a sheer drop of eighteen hundred feet to the top of a slope, from which it is two hundred feet more to the Hudson Valley below. From the top of this precipice is a magnificent panorama. Those hills far to the east are the Berkshires of Massachusetts, thirty-five miles away. Those mountains in the dim distance to the north are the Adirondacks, a hundred miles as the crow flies. Those to the south are the Highlands at West Point, sixty miles down the river. The Hudson, eight miles to the east, looks like a narrow ribbon. The Day Boat, a hundred yards long, looks like a toothpick as it wends its way northward. Fields—green, brown, yellow and gray; clumps of woods, farmsteads and trees scattered here and there can be seen in the immediate valley below. Kaaterskill Creek looks like a silver thread, meandering northward from the lower end of Kaaterskill Clove, at the southern end of South Mountain, to its confluence with Catskill Creek, at the village of Catskill. The train of cars that runs from the foot of the mountain to connect with the West Shore line at Catskill is very tiny. Horses and cows are mere specks. People are not discernible at all.

The top of this precipice is level for a distance of forty or fifty yards back to the edge of the forest, from which the mountain continues to climb. This must have been where Rip Van Winkle was taking a rest, after his long tramp up the mountain, the day one of Henry Hudson's men came up with the keg of Hollands and from here he obligingly helped the little man drag the keg further up the mountain to where the rest of the crew were rolling ten pins.

1633.—Standing on Hatshop Hill (Sunnycliffe), in Manayunk, it is not difficult to imagine Arendt Corsson and his men rolling ten pins on the top of the cliff, for they are the men

that played the part of Henry Hudson's men in the Schuylkill Valley. They give the ball such a heave, that it skips clear of the Green Lane gap; lands on Ogle's hill beyond and keeps on rolling; jumps the Levering Street gap and bumps along the cliffs above Tower Street, with such reverberations that the thunder is heard up and down the valley and on either side for many miles.

The scene from this cliff is picturesque; not as extensive as the one in the Catskills, but wild, rugged and more intimate. Half a mile to the west, flows the river at the foot of steep, wooded hills. Up river, to the right, as far as the eye can see—hills and more hills, covered with trees. Down river, to the left—the same. From the foot of the cliff to the river—trees, underbrush and coarse grass. The rumble of the Great Falls, two miles down the river, is heard when the tide is out and the wind is from the south. Bear, deer, wild turkey and quail are plentiful. Now and then Indians are seen following the trail or paddling the river in their canoes. They have named the river "Manaiung," which, according to Heckewelder, the Indian Missionary, means "where we drink." This is significant, for it indicates that the water of the Schuylkill, at that time was fit to drink. The Dutch Explorers called it the Schuylkill, meaning Hidden River, because they failed to see it as they passed up the Delaware. On the map of P. Lindstrom, a Swedish engineer, it appears as "Skiar eller linde Kill," meaning "brawling creek."

Fifty years pass. It is 1683. Surveyors appear, with their rod and chain, climbing over the rocks and through the tangled underbrush, along the edge of the river. They are Englishmen. They blaze a white oak, along the edge of the river, at the foot of Penn Street and a red oak at the foot of Levering Street. This is Philip Lehman's tract of 200 acres which he has just purchased from William Penn. It extends all the way from the river to Wissahickon Avenue. The following year they measure 158 perches



Benjamin Levering House

along the river from the red oak at the foot of Levering Street and plant a post at the foot of Hipple Lane (Fountain Street). This is Francis Fincher's tract of 500 acres also recently purchased from William Penn. It likewise extends to Wissahickon Ave. In 1691, Wigard Levering buys 200 acres of this tract and in 1697, he purchases the remaining 300 acres; while of the first tract between Levering and Penn Streets, Wigard's brother Gerhard buys the lower half and his son-in-law, Henry Fry, buys the upper.

Twenty-five years pass. It is now 1716. From the high perch on Hatshop Hill surveyors are seen again. This time they measure 111 perches from the red oak at the foot of Levering Street and blaze a large gum tree at the foot of Leverington Avenue. This land, Wigard conveys to his son Jacob. It extends from the river to Fleming Street and contains 85 acres. Jacob builds a log house on the lower side of Green Lane, just below Wood Street, and on the lower side of Carson Street, along the edge of a run, he builds a still for making gin. He also buys land on the other side of the river and builds a saw mill, crossing the river at a ford which bears his name—Levering Ford—a short distance be-

low Green Lane. In 1736 he builds the first stone house in Manayunk on the upper side of Green Lane, just below Wood Street.

As the years pass by, white men are seen more often. Fewer red men are seen. Wild animals grow more scarce. The scene becomes more domestic. The wilderness changes to farm lands and meadows. Roads appear. In 1769, Green Lane is confirmed as a public road leading from Ridge Road, Roxborough, to Levering's Ford. There is also a road along the river's edge from Wissahickon to the ford. This road has not yet been confirmed.

In the spring of the year when the water is high, the "Reading" or "Long Boats" come down the river. They are about sixty feet long and eight feet wide, with a slight rake fore and aft and pointed at both ends. They are laden with grain and produce and carry a crew of five men. The shouts of the men are heard as they sight rocks ahead in shooting the rapids up at the tunnel. One instant they are lost from view; the next instant the prow shoots high above the wave. It is dangerous business. Sometimes they are wrecked completely. In the summer, when the water is low, they poll the boats back; getting out now and then to tug them along the bank.

In 1770, Andrew Wood buys an island in the river just below the foot of Levering Street and erects a shad fishery on it. Also in this year Benjamin Levering builds a stone house at the foot of Washington (Umbria) Street. On the 14th of September, 1777, Washington's Army marches up the road along the river and crosses at the ford. In the same month some British troopers come down Green Lane, stop at Abraham Levering's house and take his son Jacob. They are really after Jacob—the spy—but they think his brother John is the one they want, and mistaking Jacob for John, they take him down the lane and cross the ford and while in the act of hanging him on a tree, some neighbors interfere and convince them that he is Jacob, whereupon they release him. Later in the month, Colonel Moylan and some Continental troopers stop at Levering's and get Jacob's tale of his adventure and incidentally some information as to the whereabouts of the British.



In 1800 Samuel Levering builds a stone house at the corner of Walnut Lane and Tower Street and ten years later Flat Rock Bridge is built at the foot of Domino Lane. It is one of those picturesque bridges, with stone piers, wooden sides and wooden roof. In 1815 a turnpike is built along the river from Wissahickon up to the bridge and from the other end of the bridge, up the west side of the river, to Bird-in-Hand Tavern.<sup>1</sup>

In 1817 gangs of men are seen digging the canal and building Flat Rock Dam. They finish the job early in 1819, and the turnpike that was built along the river in 1815, from Wissahickon up to Flat Rock Bridge, has to be vacated because it interferes with the canal, and a new road is built further inland from the river. By this time the place has become quite a settlement. There is Samuel Levering's house and Waldreth's. There are two small houses down near the locks, between Main Street and the canal, occupied by Benjamin and Michael Tibben, who now have Andrew Wood's shad fishery on the island. There's Anthony Levering's and Benjamin Levering's and Stritzel's; while up at the foot of Hipple Lane stands John Tibben's house and a small cottage on the estate of Lewis Rush. The population is sixty.

The scene becomes more and more active. Captain John Towers erects the first mill, along the canal, in 1819; Silas Levering builds the first hotel and Isaac Baird opens the first store. In the following year Chas. V. Hagner builds the second mill,<sup>2</sup> and in 1821, Wm. J. Brooke and James Elliott each build one. The place is booming. In 1822 five more mills are built.<sup>3</sup> In this year, Fairmount Dam is completed. The

Great Falls is submerged by the water of the dam, so the rumble is no longer heard; neither are the shouts of the fishermen heard any more as they draw their nets down at the island, for the dam prevents the shad from running up the stream. A great flood occurs this year, doing great damage to Flat Rock Dam and the canal. It "is considered to have possessed the greatest body of water and ice ever known." Boats pass through the canal—batteaux, arks, square-toed float-bottomed boats; boats of various description. They are polled along the bank. Some are towed by a couple of men with a rope fastened to a yoke between them.

Houses are being built, and streets laid out. The settlement has developed into a village. Within the last six years the population has grown from sixty to eight hundred. They call it "Flat Rock"—a very pleasant name; but in spite of this, on the 14th of May, 1824, Captain John Towers, Chas. V. Hagner and his brother Harry, Isaac Baird, Wm. J. Brooke and others, meet to give the village a more "appropriate" one. Captain Towers proposes "Bridgewater." Harry Hagner, being a scholar, proposes "Udora-via" — a high-



Lower Lock—Manayunk Canal

<sup>1</sup> The Commissioners were Lewis Rush, James Traquair, Joseph Starne, Horatio Gates Jones and Wm. Alexander.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Hagner sold his mill in 1839 to John Winpenny. In 1847 the firm of John Winpenny and Brother was dissolved by the withdrawal of Samuel Winpenny. It was reorganized in 1848 with Joseph Winpenny and continued until 1853, after which the business was conducted by John Winpenny alone, until he died in 1856. The mills were then rented by Philip Richards until 1858, when they passed into possession of Edward Preston, Jr., and Bolton Winpenny, who operated them until Mr. Preston withdrew in 1860, at which time Samuel Winpenny and his nephew, J. Bolton Winpenny, assumed control. In 1866 the mill was purchased by the Darrach Estate who, in 1886, sold it to Joseph M. Adams, in whose name it has continued to the present day.

<sup>3</sup> These five mills, in 1822, were built by Mark Richards & Co., Samuel R. Wood, Peter Robeson and George Smick, Wm. Alexander and Ann Dawson. In 1825 water power was sold by the Schuylkill Navigation Co. to Borie, Laguerene & Keating, Thos. B. Darrach, Smick & Gorgas and Wm. J. Brooke; in 1826, to Wm. Rowland and Borie & Laguerene; in 1827, to Wm. Morrison, Mark Richards, G. Patterson and Chas. Shippen; in 1828, to Moses Hey, Robert Shippen, Mark Richards, Samuel Eckstein; in 1831, to Joseph Ripka and Wm. Rowland and in 1833 to Dr. Moore.

sounding name. The latter is adopted and painted on a signboard on Man Street, but there is so much opposition to it that another meeting is held, at which the Indian name of the river is suggested—"Manaiung." The "i" is changed to "y" and the "g" to "k" and the name "Manayunk" is adopted amid the plaudits and approbation of all. The fame of Manayunk has gone half way 'round the world. If the name "Udora-via" had been retained, no doubt it would have gone all the way 'round. The name of Manayunk is largely responsible for its fame. Old-time minstrels could scarcely go through a performance without some one shouting, "All aboard for Manayunk." At one of these meetings, a school is suggested. Peter and Jonathan Robeson give a piece of ground on the west side of Main Street just above Penn Street; a subscription is taken and the first schoolhouse is built.<sup>1</sup> "Bishop" Hiram Ellis is the first schoolmaster. Every afternoon he leans back in his chair, covers his face with his handkerchief and takes a nap, while the pupils amuse themselves by throwing spit balls and other missiles about the room.

In 1825 the first boat load of coal comes down the canal. It passes by amid the shouts of those in the mills and those along shore. The boat is small, carrying but twenty-five tons. It takes a week for it to come from Pottsville to Philadelphia. John Coleman and Jacob Peter's packet boat, "Lady of the Lake," makes her first trip through the canal. She looks like a Noah's Ark, brilliantly colored—red and black hull; white cabin and many windows with green shutters and red curtains. The roof is crowded with passengers. The mill hands shout to them as they pass and they shout back. Passengers leave Reading at noon Monday. They are taken to Pottsgrove (Pottstown) in coaches. There they stay over night and board the boat Tuesday morning, arriving at Fairmount early in the evening. The fare from Reading to Philadelphia is \$2.50. Four more mills are built this

year. A stage coach drives down Green Lane from the Ship Tavern, at the 9th Milestone, near Ship Lane (Port Royal Ave.), Roxborough. It stops at Silas Levering's Hotel, on the Main Street, for passengers and continues on its way to the city. The stage is driven by Jacob Shuster. Traffic increases so that he puts more stages on. It isn't long before he has John Crawford as a competitor.

On July 19th, 1826, the packet boat "Independence," just finished by Messrs. Schwitz & Schwartz, makes its initial trip up the canal to Reading. She is a "very splendid boat, finished and ornamented in the style of the Erie Canal boats with three cabins; one sufficiently large to accommodate 50 people at the table. She is 70 feet long and 12 feet wide is admirably calculated for the comfort and enjoyment of travellers and pleasure parties, who will, of course, improve the present season for viewing the works of the canal and the scenery of the Schuylkill." There is much hurraing as she goes by.

By this time the road along the river and the canal, from Wissahickon to Green Lane is in such bad shape that a company is formed and a turnpike is built. So far there are no churches, so in this year, 1826, the Fourth Reformed Church is built, followed the next year by Mt. Zion. "Billy" McFadden opens a store near the lock for selling provisions to the boatmen. A canal boat captain sends his boy to Billy's store for bread, while he locks his boat through. The boy orders two loaves of wheat bread and one of rye and puts a quarter on the counter; whereupon Bill shouts, "Two o' wheat and one o' rye, three eights are twenty-five. Hurry up, you'll miss your boat." On the first of March, 1828, Billy buys a piece of ground further up the "road leading to Flat Rock Bridge," next to the schoolhouse lot, from Peter Robeson.<sup>1</sup>

Captain John Towers undertakes to build a bridge across the river in 1828. He is obliged, by an act of Legislature, to complete it within three years, but he dies before finishing it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Peter & Jonathan Robeson convey the ground to Jerome Keating and Henry Morris in 1827, (Deed Book GWR 23, page 633), and in 1828, it is conveyed to the trustees—Jonathan Robeson, Wm. Brooke, Samuel Wagner, Thomas P. Darrach, Isaac Baird and John J. Borie (Deed Book GWA 23, page 638).

<sup>2</sup> Deed Book GWR 19, page 674.

<sup>3</sup> At low water the pier foundations of this bridge can still be seen a short distance above the Green Lane Bridge.



Captain Towers was a remarkable man, with unlimited energy, initiative and ingenuity. As he was the first to perceive the possibilities of the canal at Manayunk and the first to build a mill there, Mr. Chas. V. Hagner, another one of the early pioneers of the village, regards him as the "Founder of Manayunk," and suggests that it should have been named "Towerville." In fact, the Captain's restless energy and "bullheadedness" were indirectly the cause of his death, as related by Mr. Hagner, in a trip, that he took with the Captain, to Norristown, in a buggy. There was something wrong with the breeching of the harness; Mr. Hagner called his attention to it and he attempted to fix it with a rope; It was no better and Mr. Hagner warned him that it was dangerous to proceed further with it in that condition, but he insisted that it was all right. In going down the long hill on the Ridge Road at Barren Hill, the rope broke and the buggy slid up on to the horses' heels; the horse kicked and reared and finally settled the matter by galloping down the hill at top speed; before they reached the bottom, the buggy must have struck a stone or something, for it upset and both men were thrown out against a tree. They were both pretty badly hurt but the Captain was the worse of the two; he had one arm and two ribs broken. He never got over it and died shortly after. Mr. Hagner says if it hadn't been for this accident and his untimely death, the Captain would certainly have finished the bridge.

Two more churches are built in 1831—St. Johns and the First Presbyterian. The corner stone of St. David's is laid in 1832. By 1833 the village has grown so, that it demands a bridge nearer the center of activities than the one at Flat Rock, and as Captain John Towers has failed to build his, a company is incorporated

and builds one at the foot of Green Lane. Like Flat Rock Bridge, this also is one of those picturesque, covered wooden bridges, which blends so well with the rest of the landscape.

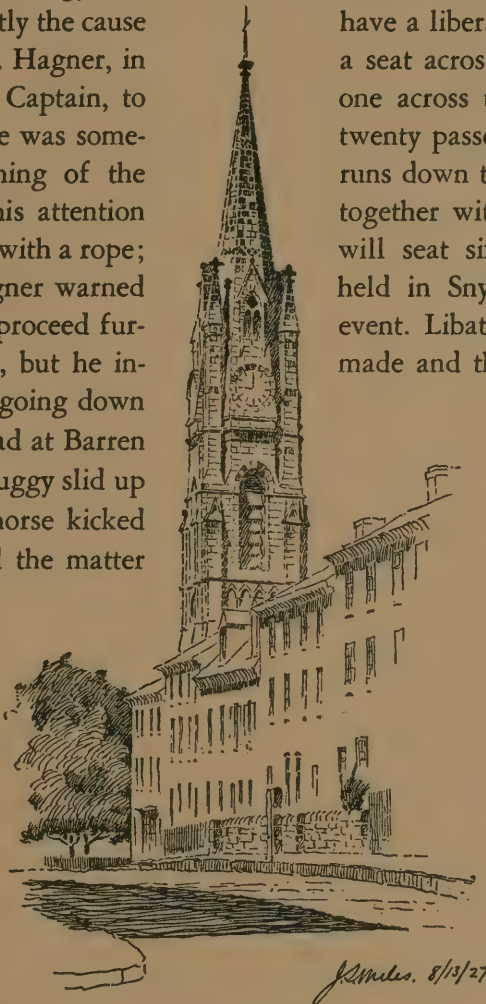
On the 18th of October, 1834, the east branch of the Reading Railroad is completed as far as Manayunk and the first cars arrive. Each car is drawn by one horse. The cars look like stage coaches. They are brilliantly colored and have a liberal amount of gilding. There is a seat across the front for the driver and one across the back. There are seats for twenty passengers inside. A double bench runs down the middle of the roof; which, together with the cross seats at the ends, will seat sixteen more. A celebration is held in Snyder's Hotel in honor of the event. Libations are poured, speeches are made and the shouts and laughter of the

merry-makers can be heard.<sup>1</sup> On the 15th of August, 1835, the road is completed to Norristown. Small engines with large funnel shaped smokestacks, take the place of horses and draw six cars each. The fare from Philadelphia to Norristown is 37½c.

Flat Rock Tunnell is finished at last, on December 10th, 1839, and the Reading Railroad on the other side of the river is completed from Philadelphia to Norristown.

Another bad flood occurs in the river this year, "exceeding in magnitude and severity any that has taken place within the recollection of the oldest inhabitant." It damages Flat Rock Dam to such extent that it has to be rebuilt.

By 1840 the village has developed to such proportions that it withdraws from the old Roxborough Township and becomes incorpo-



St. David's P. E. Church

<sup>1</sup> Speeches are made by Samuel Nevins, President of the Company; Henry Troth, Wm. D. Lewis, Thomas Biddle, Benjamin Chew and others.



One of Manayunk's Block Houses

ated as a Borough<sup>2</sup> Joseph Ripka is made the first Burgess. Upon its incorporation as a Borough, a public school board is elected, which this year builds a school up at the "Blocks"; starts another one in the basement of the Fourth Reformed Church and still another in a house on Church Street just above St. David's Church. Mr. Wm. P. Hodgson is made schoolmaster of the one on Church Street.

On January 13th, 1842, the Main Line of the Reading Railroad is opened and the first train load of coal comes down. The cars are small, four wheeled, wooden affairs. They look like wagons. There are fifty of them in the train. They weigh 2 tons apiece and carry 3 tons of coal each. The engine is either the "Gowan and Marx" or the "Delaware" and weighs 10½ tons. It takes a day for the train to come from Mt. Carbon to Philadelphia.

In 1846 the Green Lane Grammar School is built and Mr. Hodgson is transferred from the Church Street School to the new one. Three years later Ebenezer Church is built over on Gay Street. On the 3rd of September, 1850, a great freshet occurs in the river. The Conshohocken bridge is carried away and as it floats

down the stream it strikes the Flat Rock bridge and carries it away also. In 1851 the Manayunk Baptist Church is built on Green Lane just below Wood Street. Heretofore the streets have been lighted by oil lamps and the houses by lamps and candles, but in 1852 the gas plant is erected away down Main Street, below Shurs Lane, so that from now on the lighting will be better.

1854.—Now, as we have stood on this cliff for two hundred and twenty-one years,

watching the development of the village from the rear, let us change our position and look at it from the front. We climb down the hill, go down Green Lane, cross the river and climb the hill just below the other end of the bridge.

The view is a pleasant one. The town is built on the side of a steep hill with the river at its foot. Trees and fields crown the hills in the background. Half a mile up river to the left—woods and fields. Half a mile down river to the right—the same. A mile and half up stream, Flat Rock Dam sparkles in the sun. A half mile down, the horse bridge crosses the river at the lower end of the town. Immediately below to the left is Green Lane bridge.

Mills line the opposite bank of the river, with trees between them and along the waters edge. The clack-clack of the looms and the hum of the mules is heard. Immediately back of the mills is the canal. The boats slowly pass each other, drawn by drowsy mules. The tinkle of the bells is heard as they go by and as the down river boats near the lock, at the horse bridge, the horns blow for the lock tender to open the gate.<sup>1</sup> Along the edge of the canal is the Main Street, with stores and hotels. A stage coach pulls up to the Manayunk Hotel at the foot of Jackson Street. A square beyond is the Reading Railroad parallel to the Main Street.

The houses are small, but sturdy and strong;

<sup>2</sup> The signers of the petition were: Wm. Kinsey, Joseph Ripka, John Kemton, Ira Case, James Dourmaid, Geo. Shields, Alex. Quinton, John Brown, Roger Foster, Robert M. Harris, John M. Kinley, Ezekiel Phillip Ottey, Valentine Keely, Joseph Radcliff, J. E. Kash, Benah Jones, Stephen Norman, James Devon, John Shoemaker, Wm. Given, I. V. James, Wm. McFadden, John M. Stephens, Joseph Renhart, Henry Beri, James Thomas, Hugh Mullen, James Baron, Amos Phillips, Geo. Thomas, Andrew Barr, Dennis Kelly, James McCue, Robert Donnelly, J. Winnenny, Robert White, Geo. M. Davis, James Spence, Wm. Welsh, James Rupe, David Mulier, Lewis Yerkes, Thomas F. Shromp, James Mullen, Benjamin Miles, Jessie Mancello, Wm. Carr, James Cook, Samuel B. McClellan, Geo. Sutton, Geo. Allinson, Yeamans Paul, Benj. Ziegler, Peter Fee, Chas. Book, John Donnelly, Andrew Young, Geo. Jagger, James M. Smith, John P. Thompson, David Bannister, John Mason, John D. Bowker, Benj. Tibben, John Mitchell, Johnson Getteland, Wm. Colbatt. (Quarter Sessions Court Docket, Vol. 12, page 343.)

<sup>1</sup> Among the old boatmen from Manayunk were: Henry Dawson, Chris. Reumshart, Frank Thomas, John Ward, John Wolfington, Jos. Yarnall, Griffith Yarnall, John Wheeler, Patrick Nulty, David Wallace, Geo. Armitage, Frazier Bailiff, Wm. Laycock, Wm. Beatty, James Beatty, "Humph" Bailiff, James Johnson, John Minnick, Benj. Minnick, Aaron Boud and the Holgates.



with plastered stone walls and steep gable roofs, stepped one above the other as they ascend the hill. Trees rear their heads above the housetops. Here and there a church is seen; its white paint gleaming in the sun and standing out sharply against the green of the trees.

At the up river end of the town are open fields and trees, with here and there a house. There stand the two block houses, after which that part of the town is named—"The Blocks." These two houses, with their great gambrel roofs—four houses under each roof—look like Dutch wind-jammers. Green Lane, Levering Street and Shurs Lane are the only streets running through to Roxborough. They run through gaps between the hills. The other streets in that direction stop at the foot of the high cliffs. There is no house on Hatshop Hill. Mr. Ogle's house stands among the trees on the cliff between Green Lane and Levering Street.

On Green Lane, almost opposite the Baptist Church lives Perry Levering, the great-grandson of Jacob Levering, in the house that Jacob built in 1736. It is a small stone house, now plastered, with a high porch right along the sidewalk. Steps go up to the porch from the sidewalk. Trees surround the house and one especially big one overhangs it. Beyond the house, in the rear, is an orchard. The boys bother the life out of Perry in this orchard. As they steal the apples, Perry chases them. After they have reached safety, they taunt him by shouting, "Perry in your lot, stealing all you got."

The first house on the left side of Green Lane, beyond Manayunk Avenue—the old Keely homestead—is the residence and private school of Rev. Samuel Bumstead. Like "Bishop" Ellis, Mr. Bumstead takes a nap after the noon recess, but before doing so, smokes a long clay pipe. It is the daily duty of one of the boys to fill this pipe and hold a lighted taper to it until the old man has it lit. One day the boys play a joke. A little powder is mixed with the tobacco. The old man puffs complacently. The boys wait expectantly. Just as the old man is falling into a doze—Bang! The bowl of the pipe blows off the stem!

In thirty years Manayunk has grown from a small village of eight hundred people, to a busy and prosperous town of over six thousand. It has gained the reputation of being the largest manufacturing center in Philadelphia County. It is called the "Manchester of America." In these thirty years Philadelphia has also grown out of bounds, so in this year 1854, Manayunk, Roxborough and Wissahickon, which, in the early days, were combined as Roxborough Township, are all incorporated as the Twenty-first Ward of the great City of Philadelphia.

In 1858, Martin Nixon, of the Flat Rock Mills, which stand along the canal bank, beyond the upper end of the town, improves the method of making straw paper, and furnishes the Public Ledger with the first straw paper used by a newspaper press in this country. This adds to the fame of the town.

A horse car line to the city is completed in 1859 and the first car arrives. It comes tinkling along Main Street, amid the hurrahs of the crowd. Both sides of the street are lined to see the new toy. The horses are gayly decorated. The car is brilliantly colored—yellow predominating, with red trimmings. It has six windows on each side and the seats run along the sides of the car. The old stage coach will now have to take a back seat.

The American Wood Paper Company is organized in 1868, and erects the Pulp Works, up at the "wide," along the canal bank, just above the Flat Rock Mills, to make paper out of wood pulp. This adds materially to the prosperity of the town.

In the summer of 1868, Shawmont reservoir is completed and supply mains are laid; "but little distributing pipe has yet been applied for or laid *and very little anxiety has been exhibited by the citizens of Manayunk and Roxborough to take the water.*" Water is pumped into the reservoir on April 5th, 1869, but it leaks so badly that the pumping has to be discontinued until the leaks are repaired. Pumping is resumed in December.

The old town pump has had its day. No longer will the boys be able to put their tongues

on the iron pump handle on cold frosty mornings and have them stick to it. The passing of the old pumps will also have a deterrent effect on the town gossip, as the good housewives will no longer be able to meet at these centers with their buckets and pitchers and pass the time o' day.

On the 4th of October, 1869, the worst flood in the history of the river occurs; surpassing those of '22, '39 and '50. The water rises higher and higher until the canal and the river are one. A canal boat, full of coal, docked in front of the Pulp Works, breaks from its moorings and floats over into the river. On the boat are the captain and a boy. The captain throws a yawl overboard and springs into it, calling to the boy to follow. For some reason the boy fails to do so and is carried down the river on the boat. The water is a raging torrent, reaching almost to the under side of the Green Lane bridge. The boat gathers tremendous momentum as it nears the bridge. Nearer and nearer it comes. The people shout from the shore. The boy stands on deck, apparently dazed.—Thud! Crash! Smash! Splintering and rending timbers! A whole span of the bridge is torn away. The boat reels, staggers and capsizes. The boy disappears and is seen no more.

A movement is started in 1872 to erect an incline plane railroad from Manayunk to Roxborough. The intention is to start at the foot of Gay Street and run to the top of the cliff. From here it is to continue and connect with a horse car line up on Ridge Road, Roxborough. The location is changed to run up Levering Street. The bill of incorporation is signed by Governor Hartranft, April 10, 1873. The "name, style and title" of the Company is "The Manayunk and Roxborough Incline Plane Railway Company" or the M. & R. I. P. R. W., for short.<sup>1</sup> A working model is made by Thomas Shaw and a patent applied for. Ground is broken on the last day of 1873. On the 6th of June, 1874, a meeting of the Company is held and a dispute arises over the Incline. So much of the stock is

withdrawn that the Incline Plane proposition is abandoned and efforts are concentrated on the Ridge Road horse car line in Roxborough.

The Pennsylvania Railroad is built in 1884. It crosses the river, from the hill on which we stand, to the Manayunk side, on the high steel bridge, shaped like the letter "S."

1888.—The intercepting sewer and branches are being installed. The old outhouse will have to go. The polluted air, which, formerly on still hot summer nights, could be cut with a knife, will soon clarify. Streets, which hitherto in the spring of the year and rainy seasons, have been veritable quagmires, and gutters, reeking with green and black scum, are being graded and paved with Belgian blocks.

1890.—Up to this time the Green Lane bridge has been a Pay Bridge, charging a penny, each way, for each person. Pennies are scarce and very few boys have any at all. Stuart Lyle's orchard on the hill, on the west side of the river, above the bridge, with its cherries and apples and pears, is a great temptation; the open country over there is alluring; the races at Belmont Track can't be seen without crossing the river; so the boys without pennies, tie their clothes in a bundle on their heads and swim across from "back o' Jims";<sup>1</sup> only to find when they have reached the other shore that the bundle has slid to one side and is wet.

In this year, the bridge is purchased by the Philadelphia and Montgomery Counties and made free,<sup>2</sup> whereupon the boys troop across in droves and indulge in the dangerous sport of jumping the coal trains of the Reading Railroad; riding up to Mill Creek and back; some going even further. They become such a pest that the Company has to employ men to prevent it. On Thanksgiving Day the cry goes forth and spreads like wildfire that one of the boys—Jack B——— has had both legs cut off, up at Mill Creek. Poor Jack; what a daredevil he's been; always up to something; the dread of all other boys, big and little; always picking a fight; the first one to run ticklies on thin ice in the winter and the first to go through. But he's still game;

<sup>1</sup> The officers were Thomas Shaw, Pres.; C. J. McGlinchey, Treas.; Wm. H. Lewis, Sec.; P. S. Talmage, P. K. Boyer, Jas. F. Nicholas, Wm. C. Todd, S. S. Keely, Wm. Ring and Jacob S. Fry, Directors.

<sup>1</sup> Back of Mr. James Winpenny's mill.

<sup>2</sup> It was through the efforts of Joseph Miles that the bridge was made free.



he buttons up his coat and gives directions as he is lifted up and taken to St. Timothy's Hospital, where he lays for a long time. Even worse than having his legs cut off, is when they put hot water bags around them at the hospital; one of the bags bursts and scalds him. Jack says his feet still itch in hot weather and he has to scratch the butt ends of his legs.

Speaking of the boys swimming the river with their clothes on their heads; why, there isn't a boy in Manayunk that can't swim. It's part of his education. There isn't a better swimming school in the world than at those rocks along the west shore, three hundred yards above the bridge.

His first lessons are from shore to the Baby Rock; the distance is about fifty feet; the water, three or four feet deep and the bottom of smooth solid rock. As soon as he learns to swim to this rock, the next step is to swim from the Baby Rock to the Diver—about fifty yards. The Diver is a smooth round knob of a rock at the end of some great big rocks which extends a hundred yards from shore to mid-stream. Not every boy will forget this feat—how he was almost winded before he reached the goal.

His next lesson is in diving; first a standing dive from the little knob; then a two step dive from a larger knob to the little knob and then in; then a running dive from the smooth surface of the big rocks, touching the larger knob and the little knob as he goes. As he becomes more proficient he jumps clear over the knobs altogether and as still more expert, turns a somersault in the air as he clears the knobs.

His next feat is to swim across the channel, from the Diver to east shore, stopping for wind on the sand bar half way over. While performing this feat the dirty beggars on the big rocks "chaw beef" on him; they tie knots in his under-shirt. On his way back he hears them shout "Chaw beef! Chaw beef! Chaw your mutton, chaw your beef!" When he comes to put his shirt on he finds so many knots in it he has to take it home in his pocket.

One hot summer day a dozen or so fellows went up to Stuart Lyle's orchard, and after eating a lot of apples, came down to the Diver to

go into swim. They hadn't been in long before big Bill T——— got a cramp and called for help. The fellows swam out to him and had quite a time dragging him in. He was a tall, long-legged fellow and the cramp had him all tied up into knots; howasever they managed to get him to the rocks and after rubbing him awhile he was all right.

As for fishing and boating—there is no better place. The sunfish up at the tunnel are as big as the palm of his hand and plenty of them. All he has to do is get a wasp nest full of young grugs; go up there and he'll come home with a sunny for every grub. Black Bass are also good there but he must be careful or he'll get his hook caught. It's very rocky. The bottom of the river up there must be covered with hooks and dipsies. Bass and Yellow Neds are also good in the channel off those rocks beyond the Diver, and for eels and catfish—the canal is full of them. He can get suckers, too, in the spring of the year, when the water is still cold; in the swift water, just below Flat Rock Dam.

If he has an old canoe or some kind of a light boat that two can carry and he isn't afraid if a hole gets stove in it; there isn't a better sport, when the water is high, not too high, though, than to go up the canal; carry the boat over to the river; launch it at a point opposite the tunnel, and shoot the rapids. He had better be careful, though, for the rocks are bad.

For hikes, why, there's all outdoors over there on the west side; around Rock Hill, up to Mill Creek, or over to Boulder's Woods. In the summer—wild cherries galore. In the fall—chestnuts, wanuts, hickory nuts, shellbarks, butternuts and persimmons by the bushel!

Out in the field, just before he comes to Boulder's Woods, is a great big chestnut tree, just loaded with chestnuts. He'll have to keep a sharp eye out for Sim Jones' dog, though, he's a bad one.

If he's fond of gunning, he'll find plenty of rabbits and squirrels over there, and in the hollow near the duck pond, this side of the woods, are robbins, flickers, and meadow larks. When the water's high, there are muskrats by the score up along the river at the tunnel; the water

routs them out of their holes and they scamper along the water's edge. There are possums up there, too, on Tunnel Hill.

Skating is another part of a Manayunk boy's education. His first lessons are taken on Rudolph's Dam—a small dam on the west side along Belmont Road in the hollow just beyond the Reading Railroad. Having learned the rudiments of the sport here, he walks a mile and a half further on to where the more accomplished skaters go—Schofield's Dam. This is a pretty dam, a couple o' hundred yards long and a hundred wide, situated among wooded hills along State Road. Here he is initiated into the game of "Shinny" (developed in later years into ice hockey). After having had his shine cracked several times with a shinny stick or the wood block he is introduced to the game of "Crack-the-whip." He is placed at the end of a long line of skaters, at the upper end of the lake; each man with his arms outstretched and holding tightly the hand of his neighbor. Down the lake they come, faster and faster; all swinging together. Presently the hub man shouts, "Turn!" He digs his skate into the ice and stops abruptly, holding tight to the fellow next to him, who holds tight to the fellow next to him and so on. The skaters stop skating and glide by the momentum they have gained. The line swings in a circle. The tension becomes greater and greater to those farther from the hub. The novice at the end of the line can hold on no longer. Away he goes and either sprawls all over the ice or, if he can hold his feet, he flies like an arrow.

There's a place over there by the east shore, that rarely freezes over, on account of a spring at the bottom of the lake. One day during a "Crack-the-whip" game, Bill B——— was at the end of the line; he was slung so hard, toward this place, that he couldn't stop. C-r-ackle! S-w-sh! In he goes, over his head, skates and all. "Man overboard." Quick! Get that fence rail over there on the shore! Throw it to him! Take hold of this rail, Bill! Billy grabs the rail and manages by the help of the others to make shore. He's a bedraggled mess; soaking wet, and it's cold. "Build a fire, fellows! Chipper go! Who's got a match? More wood!"

Pretty soon a good blaze is kindled and it isn't long before a big fire is roaring. Steam begins to rise from Billy's wet clothes. After he has gotten pretty well dried out and heated up, he puts his skates on again and depends on the crisp dry air and exertion to complete the drying process.

Returning to our young skater, he learns to skate backward; then the "Circle" and the "Roll," forward and backward; likewise the "Figure Eight." When he has mastered the convolutions of the "Grape Vine," he is a full-fledged skater and exhibits his skill with pride before the onlookers.

For long distance he skates up the canal to the "Wide"; then on to the upper lock, where he takes his skates off, walks over the lock and dons them again on Flat Rock Dam, where he skates to Conshohocken—four miles; or he skates down the river from Wissahickon to Fairmount—five miles. These long distance feats are rare, though, for it isn't often that the river freezes over to this extent. The last time this was done was in the winter of 1895.

The hills of Manayunk were just made for sledding and they're full of them when sledding's good. There's danger, though, where the railroad crosses at the foot of the steep streets and it keeps the "cops" busy preventing accidents. Many a boy has been "nabbed" by Billy Green; taken to the station house and had his sled taken from him for sledding across the tracks. Gay Street is one of the best to sled on because there's not so much traffic. There's an old man lives half way up that street that doesn't like boys and he doesn't like sleds. His name is "Daddy" Small. For a livelihood he brings something or other home from the mills and picks all the little steel stickers out of it. These stickers he saves until he has about a bushel; then, when sledding is at its best and the street has been worn smooth as glass, old man Small brings this bushel of stickers out and maliciously scatters them over the street. The next fellow down the hill strikes these stickers and sprawls all over the street. This puts an end to sledding on Gay Street until enough snow can be gathered to cover them up.



Sleighting is indulged in along the Wissahickon by the more fortunate; although many a box has been rigged up on a pair of runners; an old plug of a horse hitched to it; a couple of bobsleds tied on behind and away they go. Why, there isn't a better place in the country 'round for the liberal education of a boy than Manayunk!

May 19th, 1894.—The trolley line, up the hill, from Manayunk to Roxborough is completed. This line will take the place of the Inclined Plane, abandoned twenty years ago.

May 25th, 1894.—Another big freshet, rivaling the one of '69. The people in the houses along the river get out the second story windows in boats. The canal and the river are one. The water reaches to within three and a half feet of the high mark of '69. Great damage is done and great loss of property, but fortunately—this time—no lives are lost.

August 29th, 1894.—The trolley line from the city is finished and the first car comes up Main Street. The old horse, that has stood for so many years under the railroad bridge at the Falls, to be hitched to the car and drag it up Strawberry Hill, can now take a long rest.

1902.—The filtering beds are built at Shawmont. The water from the spigot, which formerly was raw—just as it came from the river—will soon be clear. Hitherto, during a freshet, the water from the spigot would turn yellow, as coming from the region below Norristown; then red as the Perkiomen water came down, then dark brown from Reading and finally black, as it came from the coal regions, and black it would stay for weeks and weeks; all types leaving a sediment in the container, like powdered coffee in a percolator, accompanied by their various odors and flavors. Germs? Whew! It's a wonder any one lives to tell the tale. Prudent housewives used to constantly keep a pot on the fire to kill the germs; permitting it to cool after coming to a boil and drawing off the clear after it has cooled. It wasn't fit to wash in, not to mention drink.

March 1st, 1902—After a long rainy spell the river begins to move about mid-afternoon of February 28th. The movement at first is

sluggish. It grows more rapid as evening approaches. Toward midnight it begins to look like a flood. About 1 A. M. the good housewife shakes her husband by the shoulder and says, "John, John! Get up. The whistles are blowing!" Lights appear in the houses. Men hurry through the streets. Lanterns flicker along the river bank. Stakes are driven in at the water's edge to measure the rise. The report is that the water is rising two inches in ten minutes—twelve inches an hour. The indications are that it will be a bad one. Lights are seen in the lower stories of the mills. Men move the stock out of danger. Belts are cut from the machinery and taken away. Ropes are lashed around lumber piles along the River Road. The larger piles are tied to trees, telegraph poles—anything. The smaller ones are loaded onto wagons and hauled to higher ground. Men work frantically. They shout, swear, curse. Horses kick and snort. Ropes squeak. Chains clank. Wheels creak.

By morning the word has spread. People breakfast hurriedly and run to the river. The Bridge is crowded and the banks of the river are lined with people. It's a fascinating sight for those who have nothing at stake, but it's awful for those who have. A strange ominous sound is heard. It's more than a murmur. It isn't a roar. It's an uncanny washy sound. It means destruction.

River Road is flooded. The water is a dirty brown color. The black water hasn't come down yet. All sorts of things are floating down—drift wood, boards, planks, small logs, big logs; huge tree trunks, that have lain along the banks of small streams for years; too heavy to be moved, except by deep water—they wallow and pitch and roll; disappear and reappear. The water boils around the bridge piers, forming big mounds on the upper sides and great hollows on the lower sides. A cradle races down stream, followed by a chicken coop; a rowboat, that has broken its moorings; an outhouse, the gable end of a frame barn, the whole roof of a frame building. The ropes around one of the big piles of lumber loosen; a board slides out, then another and another. Presently the whole pile floats out and down it goes. Another one fol-

lows. Four of them go.

All sorts of rumors spread—the Main Street is flooded at Shurs Lane; the trolley cars can't get beyond Wissahickon!—The railroad is flooded at Spring Mill; the trains can't go beyond Lafayette!—It's still raining at Reading!—A bridge above Reading has been carried away!—The first dam below Reading has burst!—The Big Catfish Dam has broken!

The water is almost up to the eaves of the one-story houses in front of Rudolph's Mill. The people living along River Road have long since carried everything to the upper stories. They get out of the second-story windows in boats. The canal and the river are one. The water touches the eaves of the one-story houses—the high mark of '69.

It has stopped raining at Reading. The water hovers 'round the high mark for an hour. It begins to fall. The worst is over. It falls one inch in fifteen minutes. The people come and go until late in the evening. During the night and the following day the water lowers gradually. The banks are strewn with driftwood, debris and wreckage. River Road, the lower stories of the mills, the first floor of the houses—everything is covered with soft, dirty, foul-smelling mud. Men shovel it up, scrape it out and haul it away. It takes days and days to clean it up. Thousands and thousands of dollars are lost, but fortunately—again—no lives are lost.

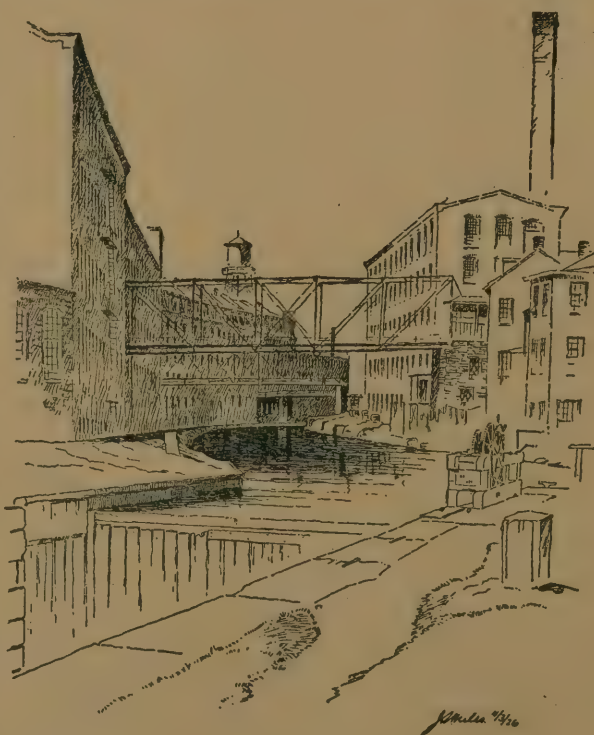
February 9th, 1910, 7.30 P. M. The watchman has just gone his rounds. All's well. What's that light in the window? It's red. Is it a reflection? No. It can't be a fire. Everything was all right a bit ago. Smoke curls out of the cracks of the frame

structure. It must be on fire. It *is* on fire! Quick! Blow the whistle! The sash and door factory at West Manayunk is on fire! It spreads rapidly. Here come the men. Get the horses out o' the stable! Get the safe out o' the office! The shavings feed the flames. Boards, frame walls and shingle roof are an easy prey. The flames shoot out the windows and through the roof.

The Manayunk Fire Company, just across the river, is out in a jiffy. Here they come over the bridge. The bridge shakes like a leaf. The planks jump and rattle. Easy there, go easy! There are no fire plugs on the west side. They draw water from the river. The fire is away beyond control. The flames leap high in the air. The lumber sheds have caught. The sky is lit up for miles around. People run from all directions. The bridge is full and every point of vantage is taken. The hill above the mill is crowded. More alarms are rung and more firemen arrive. Hose lines are stretched across the bridge and attached to plugs on the Manayunk side. The stable's in flames. The office is gone. The fire jumps to the lumber piles. Never was there such a fire since Campbell's mill burnt down, back in the early '90's. It's a seething

furnace. The flames are hill-top high. A locomotive brings several tenders full of water up from the Falls. No use. You might as well squirt a garden hose at it! There isn't enough water in the river to stop it. By midnight there's nothing left but piles of glowing embers. The people go home. The firemen hang on. By morning there isn't enough left to haul away in a cart, except the brick boiler house, the chimney and a tangled mass of machinery.

A conference is held. Insurance is adjusted.



Mills on the Canal



The office of the Justice of Peace nearby is commandeered. Plans are drawn. Bricklayers, stone masons and carpenters are engaged. Up goes a new brick structure superior to the old one. New machinery is installed. In two months, from the time it burnt down, it is in operation again. American ingenuity! Never-say-die! Tiger!!

In 1917 the big steel "S" bridge of the Pennsylvania Railroad has become so weak that trains have to go over it very slowly, so in this year it is replaced by a concrete structure. In 1928, the bridge at Green Lane also has become so shaky and so narrow that it cannot accommodate the heavy traffic; so in this year it is removed and a new concrete bridge is built twice the width of the old one.

1930.—Away back in 1838 Samuel Lawson suggested that the Fourth Reformed Sunday School take a picnic on the Fourth of July. The suggestion was adopted and a picnic was taken on the hill, above Tower Street, which at that time was called "The Barracks." It was so successful that all the other Sunday Schools of Manayunk adopted the custom which has continued to the present day. It is unique in this section of the city and has gained for it a wide reputation. In 1873 the Manayunk Baptist Sunday School made it still more unique by going to Spring Mill on a canal boat, accompanied by the Haddington Cornet Band.

This custom has grown to such extent that early in the morning of the Fourth of July each year, the Sunday Schools of the Twenty-first Ward turn out en masse and march up Lyceum Avenue, Roxborough; filling the street from curb to curb and end to end, with bands playing and flags flying, bedecked in gay colored costumes, carrying banners and insignias of different types. At the end of the parade they disperse and go to their respective woods to spend the day playing games, eating ham sandwiches and drinking lemonade.

When Samuel Lawson, son of the original Samuel Lawson, died in 1922, he left, as a memorial to his father, a legacy of \$2,000 to the Manayunk Baptist Sunday School and a like amount to the Fourth Reformed Sunday

School, the income from which was to help defray the expenses of the Fourth of July picnic of these two schools. May this custom live for generations to come!

And now in the year of our Lord, 1930, Manayunk is fully developed and fitted with all modern conveniences. Grade crossings are, this year, being eliminated by elevating the tracks. Work has begun on electrifying both railroads. Electric light is at hand though some of the houses still burn gas. Many of the houses have telephones but more have radios. Besides a Bank, a Trust Company, two libraries and two theatres there are numerous garages.

The streets are all paved. Auto trucks haul coal and merchandise up the steep hills with ease, whereas in times past horses did this work; tugging, straining and dragging under the lash of the whip; clawing for a foothold; blowing and sweating; stopping now and again for wind and finally reaching the top, steaming, all in and covered with foam.

The houses are so thick that no more can be built. Some are perched up on the rocks; others sunk down in the holes. Some are so high as to have twenty-three steps from the street up to the first floor. Others so far down that two stories are below the street level. All the houses are connected with the sewer. Many of the old outhouses, however, still stand as relics of the past, but are used now as receptacles for shovels, rakes, hoes and clothes poles. The old town pump and the other pumps have gone. All the houses have clear running water, but not all have bathtubs; in such, the Saturday night ablutions are taken in a wash boiler in the kitchen.

A little narrow street called Harrison Street running from Oak Street to Gay Street is lined on both sides with small houses. Years ago these houses were filled with Poles. Every now and then there was a wedding. A Polish wedding lasts all day and all night. The dancing is accompanied by a fiddler playing on two strings of a violin; first on one and then on the other; this and the shuffle of the dancers' feet was distracting.

At the corner of Harrison and Gay Streets

lived an Irishman, named Bob B———. Bob was also an Orangeman and on the first day of July, each year, he wanted everybody to know it. Almost directly opposite, on Gay Street, lived Pete D———. Pete was also an Irishman but not an Orangeman. On hot summer nights Bob and Pete slept on the door step. On such nights arguments arose over the Battle of the Boyne. The arguments were usually ended with bricks.

Stuart Lyles' orchard is gone. There's no more swimming at the Baby Rock and the Diver. Chestnuts are but a memory. Squirrels and

rabbits are scarce. The muskrats have disappeared and the only fish in the river are those miserable carp. Sledding is a thing of the past. Skating is a rarity and a sleigh is an antique. Rudolph's dam and Schofield's dam have long since been filled up. Boulder's Woods is a residential section; so is Belmont Race Track. The last canal boat was locked through in 1916 and the old boatmen have "crossed the bar" along with a great host of others that have contributed to the name and the fame of this town, built upon the bank of the Schuylkill, more than a hundred years ago—Manayunk.





View Along Tower Street





## CHAPTER 2

# DAD MURPHY

An account of the development of Manayunk would not be complete without, at least, a brief sketch of that grand old man—Robert T. Murphy; fondly known as "Dad Murphy"; principal of and teacher in the Manayunk Boys' Grammar School for thirty-seven years; from 1866, until he died in 1903.

Many of the town's leading citizens; men standing high in the community, finished their schooling in the Senior Class of his school. In this class, taught by Dad himself, they learned, not only Reading, Writing and Arithmetic, but, under his wing, they obtained a liberal education, that went much further than the "Three R's." To him they owe a large measure of their success in later life, for Dad Murphy had a way with him that went far beyond the school room and ranked him as an outstanding character and one of the all-time teachers of the age.

One February, in the late 80's, a score of boys, who had finished their course in Fairview School, started for the Manayunk Grammar School to continue their education. They did not seem as joyful and were not as hilarious as one might expect they should be. Noticing that they started down the back way instead of the Green Lane way, one of them asked the fellow next to him why it was. Without raising his head, the fellow said, "Goin' to be 'nitiated."

They cut across the fields, went down Gay Street steps and along Wood Street. As they neared Mulberry Street, a crowd of boys was congregated on the corner; presently one of the crowd shouted, "Here they come, fellows."

Well, they were "'nitiated," all right. More than one of them carried a "goose egg" on his head for some time, from the missiles thrown, and there was many a black eye.

In this way they passed into the Manayunk Boys' Grammar School, and after a couple of years, in the lower classes, they entered the "sanctum sanctorum," or Dad's own classroom, with considerable trepidation, for they knew, from what they had seen and what they had

heard, that Dad's method of discipline was not with the soft pedal.

In those days Dad Murphy was tall and straight, with shoulders thrown back and chest thrown out; big bones, big joints, big hands; beard, bald head, square-toed shoes—pretty big ones, too: Spread his feet out when he walked; gray suit, cut-away coat, gray high hat and cane—a typical village schoolmaster.

Each day, after lunch, he could be seen coming down Green Lane and entering the schoolyard with Miss Ella Morgan—he tall, she short; then he would go up to the third story and, during the baseball season, would watch the game in the schoolyard below. When the time was up he would ring a great big dinner bell, and if any one was a bit tardy in responding, he would lean over the window sill and shout, "Hey, you! What d'you suppose I rang this bell for, heh? Come up here!"

The home plate was under a large maple tree, close to the Green Lane gate; first base was a marble slab at the foot of a rainspout against the schoolhouse; second, was one of the flagstones in the middle of a path that crossed the schoolyard, and third was over near Ferguson's fence.

Sometimes Dad got into the game himself, at which times he played first base. Throw the ball as hard as they would at him, with the intention of knocking him out, he was always there and as game as the rest; those long legs, long arms and big hands stood him in good stead.

One day some one muffed the ball. Jack B——— and another fellow ran for it. They were both about to pick it up at the same time. The other fellow got it. In his usual manner, Jack said, "Do you want to fight?"

The other fellow said, "Yes."

During the scuffle, Dad yelled down, from the window above, "Hey, you two fellows! Come up here; I'll lick you both."

He would say, "Don't forget to shine your heels when you shine your shoes." His were

always shined. This neatness and exactness pervaded all that he did; especially his writing. He wrote a large, bold hand; slowly, carefully, deliberately; every letter formed perfectly.

"Always dot your i's and cross your t's. What are you doing there, S———?"

"Nuthin'."

"Ten notes for doing nuthin'."

A note meant that the miscreant had to stay after school and write the same word over and over again ten or twenty times. Ten of them kept him in until four o'clock. On extreme provocation a fellow got twenty.

"Punctuate this sentence as I read it. Notice how I read it. 'What do you think? I will give you a shave and buy you a drink.'"

"Now, punctuate it as I read it this time. 'What! Do you think I will give you a shave and buy you a drink?'"

"What's the matter with this one, S———? Read it."

"I saw a man digging a well with a Roman nose."

Well, S———, didn't know how it could be done.

"What's the matter with the next one, W———? Read it."

"For sale, a piano by a woman, with carved legs."

W——— didn't think a woman's legs were carved.

Dad was a member of the old school, which believed that to spare the rod, spoiled the boy. Well, he didn't spare the rod and he didn't spoil the boy. He kept a ruler on his desk for that purpose and when the ruler wasn't handy he used the palm of that great big hand of his on the side of the unruly individual's head.

One day he asked McD——— what the word "ammunition" meant. McD——— said, "Load 'er up." Dad came down the aisle, with red in his eye, and gave him such a crack on the head, it was heard in the next room. McD——— attempted to retaliate. Dad grabbed him by the shoulders and shoved him so far down in his seat, you couldn't see him.

Then he lifted him clear off his feet. McD——— grabbed an inkwell, on the way up, and threw it at him. Dad dodged and it hit the blackboard. Then the scuffle got in earnest. Dad grabbed him and dragged him toward the door. McD——— twined his legs around Dad's and twisted them around the desks. Slowly they writhed and wriggled toward the door. McD——— picked up a slate on the way and hurled it at him, but it missed the mark. Finally they reached the door. McD——— hooked his feet around the door jamb. Dad unhooked him and got him out into the stairway. Down the stairs they went, fighting every inch of the way. When they reached the bottom, he shoved McD——— out the door and told him to go home. When Dad came back into the room, he looked as if he had been through a mangle. What hair he had was all dishevelled; his collar, unbuttoned and all awry; his tie, away around the back of his neck, and most of the buttons off his vest.

There was no segregating of classes in those days, as there is now. The hoodlums, barbarians and the scholars were all boiled in the same pot. The bright and the dull; the strong and the weak; the big and the little, were all salted together. It was the survival of the fittest. Fortunately the classes were not large. There was a fellow there, they called "Monk," because he looked like a baboon. One Easter Monday he threw an egg at a fellow. If he hadn't been a poor shot he'd have spoiled a good hat. There was another fellow lived over on Center Street. He was a bad one. One day he deliberately threw a stone at a fellow, across the street. He was a better shot than Monk, and he hit him square in the eye. It might have been more serious than it was. A friend of the fellow that was struck, was with him at the time, and he suggested that a raw oyster be put on it. The fellow that was struck had never heard of such a remedy, but he was willing to try anything, so they bought a raw oyster and tied it on. No doubt his friend's intentions were good, but the oyster would certainly have done more good inside.

On the other side of Mulberry Street there



used to be a run called Stillhouse Run. It got its name from a gin still, that Jacob Levering had along its bank, just in that locality, many years ago. As the years went by, the run dwindled to a very small, dirty stream and ran down an alley, which took the name of Stillhouse Alley. It was also called Drout's Alley from the name of a saloon at the foot of it. It had a third name, which was the most appropriate of the three—the Back Alley. It was dirty as a pig sty.

Those that lived down Manayunk or over Gay Street way, used this alley as a short cut to school. At the upper end of it, opposite the school, was a dirty, black pool of water, at the foot of a high bank. In winter when it froze over the boys ran "ticklies" on it. One day one of the fellows "went through." He was fished out and sent home. He was sent home, not so much as he was wet, but because he smelt like a sewer.

One day, on the high bank at the side of this pool, some one dumped a load of corncobs. The boys were not long in finding that these cobs furnished good ammunition for a fight. When the bell rang for the afternoon session, those that had been driven near the school, ran in for cover, and as they reached the head of the third story stairs, they poked their heads out of the window at the fellows below, whereupon the fellows below threw cobs at the heads in the window above. As a head appeared the cobs would fly; then the head would disappear and as one appeared again, more cobs would fly. In one of these combats, one of the fellows, thinking it was about time for a head to appear, threw a cob up at the window. The throw was well aimed and well timed. Just as the cob reached the window, the old man's bald head appeared and he caught it right between the eyes.

Dad was very fond of singing and was proud of the boys along that line. One year, while rehearsing for the Christmas entertainment, he had some song sheets printed. The first one was: "Come Where the Lillies Bloom So Fair."

The second was more sedate:

*"Home, home, name how endearing,  
Home, home, shrined in my breast.  
Thou dost know what is best.  
Home, home, sweet home,  
Thou dost know what is best."*

The third was more lively:

*"When far from the town,  
I take my way, I take my way.  
When far from the town,  
I laugh and carol free and gay."*

The fourth had a martial air and was written to a tune from Faust. The last lines were: "We'll fight for a Home! We'll fight for a Land, and sweet Liberty."

And oh, how they sang the Whippoorwill song!

*"'Tis the whippoorwill's song, he sings in yonder tree.  
How he warbles with joy; his heart is light and free,  
'Tis the whippoorwill's song; no sorrows will he bring,  
Sweetly he sings, sweetly he sings."*

But the song that Dad loved most and the one he sang by himself with great pathos:

*"I've wandered through the village, Tom;  
I've sat beneath the tree,  
Upon the schoolhouse playing ground,  
That sheltered you and me;  
But there was none to greet me, Tom,  
And few were left to know  
Who played with us upon the green,  
Some twenty years ago."*

Dad Murphy's reputation as a singing teacher had gone so far that when St. Asaph's Church was built at Bala, the choirmaster came over to the Green Lane School for choirboys.

At reciting he was a past master. To hear him recite "Horatius at the Bridge" was a thrill, and to hear him deliver "Hic jacet Joe, Hic jacet Bill," was a treat.

In the spring and fall of the year, he took his class on excursions. One spring he took the boys up to Tacony; through Disston's Saw Mill

and the Arsenal. He was full of fun and fond of a joke. While walking along the road he slipped a dollar down the inside of his pant leg and it fell out at the bottom. He picked it up, saying, "Hey! You fellows, look here! See what I just picked up—a silver dollar! Don't you want 'em? Better pick 'em up. You may need 'em."

Along about noon, they were all as hungry as bears and had nothing to eat. Some one spied a little bakeshop. They all piled in and almost upset the counter. A woman, running in from the back room, threw up her hands and screamed. Dad rushed in and holding up his cane, shouted, "Never mind, my good woman, we have only come in to buy something to eat"; whereupon the woman was all smiles. They bought everything she had.

In the afternoon he played the dollar trick again.

"But, Mr. Murphy, that looks like the same dollar you picked up this morning."

"What! The same dollar nothing! Here's the dollar I picked up this morning. One and one makes two, don't they? Count them." Then, with a merry twinkle in his eye, he would chuckle with great glee.

He also took his class up to the Switchback; up the Hudson and to other places. In modern parlance, Dad Murphy was "a good scout." While in the schoolroom he kept the lid on with an iron hand, but out of it, he was as full of fun as a goat. His selection of the third song, mentioned a while ago, must have been for its words and its sentiment. He was the embodiment of Theodore Roosevelt's famous motto, "When you work, work hard, and when you play, play hard," although he exemplified it long before Roosevelt uttered it.

The zenith of the old man's fame, however; the time when he came into his own; the occasion that displayed the love that men bore to him, was when Mr. John F. L. Morris cooked up a dinner, to be given him by his former pupils. Over two hundred of them responded. They came from far and near; from this and other cities, and met at Pencoyd Club, on the night of February 26, 1903, to pay homage to their former chief. Songs were sung; toasts were drunk and good cheer was everywhere. The old man's face was one broad smile, from ear to ear, throughout the evening.

It happened none to soon, however, for a very short time later he passed on to "that undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns"; but it is pleasant to relate and a consolation to know, that while the life blood was still in his veins, and the breath of life in his nostrils, he was privileged to enjoy this demonstration of good will, affection and appreciation of his life work.

As time goes on, Dad Murphy will go down in history as an all-time character; as famous and as lovable as "Rip Van Winkle" and "Icabod Crane," but instead of being a fictitious character, the product of a man's brain, he will be a real, living character—with a merry twinkle in his eye, bald head, beard, long arms, big hands, long legs, big feet, cut-away coat, cane and high hat—who ruled the schoolroom with a rod of iron; dispensing punishment with a ruler and the palm of his hand, but when off duty, as funny as a crutch.

The time will come, and now is, when those who came under his regime in those far-away school days at the Manayunk Boys' Grammar School; even those who "got theirs," will look back upon that grand old man—Dad Murphy—with fond recollections.



## CHAPTER 3

# THE SCHUYLKILL NAVIGATION COMPANY

The Schuylkill Navigation Company was largely, if not entirely, responsible for the existence of Manayunk; in fact, if there had been no canal, it is a question whether there would have been a Manayunk; certainly it would not have had the phenomenal development it had, nor would it have grown to the size it did, but for the canal. The ground between the canal and the river furnished an excellent location for mills, by virtue of the fact that the canal could supply them with water power. The building of the mills called for labor, materials and transportation; the mills had to have mill hands to run them; the mill hands required houses to live in, which called for more labor and materials; nor could they get along without provisions of one kind and another, which required stores, markets and other means of distribution; thus the original straggling village, that existed before the canal was built, developed, in a short time, into an independent, self-supporting town of considerable size.

The Schuylkill Navigation Company was one of the pioneers in canal construction and like all other pioneers, had to start at the bottom and dig its way out.

An Irishman and an Englishman were standing on the platform of a railroad station on a western prairie waiting for their train, which was long overdue. Having exhausted their store of anecdotes and as conversation was running low, the Irishman said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll ask you a question, and if I can't answer my own question, I'll pay for the tickets. Then you ask me one, and if you can't answer yours, you pay for the tickets."

Upon agreement by the Englishman, the Irishman said, "Do you see those prairie dog holes out there?"

"Yes," said the Englishman.

"Well, how do they dig those holes without spreading the earth around?"

"I don't know," said the Englishman, "that's yours."

"They start at the bottom and dig out. Now it's your turn."

"How do they get to the bottom?" asked the Englishman.

"I don't know," said the Irishman, "that's yours."

Upon his inability to answer his own questions, the Englishman paid for the tickets.

Now the object of this chapter is to tell how the Schuylkill Navigation Company started at the bottom and dug its way out: prospered; met with terrible struggles; was forced to the wall; got on its feet again, and after one hundred and fifty years was still going strong.

While not the first to build a canal or to improve river navigation in America, it was the largest undertaking of its kind, up to the time of its incorporation in 1815; covering 108 miles of river improvement, of which 51 miles were canals and 57 were slack water pools; requiring 32 dams (not including Fairmount dam), 114 locks and one tunnel; the dams ranging in height from 3 to 23 feet, overcoming a total fall of 610 feet.

Early in the nineteenth century, as immigration increased and the demand for transportation became greater, the Country became obsessed with the idea of building canals. As one company was organized and succeeded in obtaining state or federal aid to build a canal through a certain section of the Country, another section being jealous, would clamor for one, and so it ran until 1830, when canal building ran riot. One state after another caught the infection and the fever ran as far west as Indiana and Illinois. "We trust the time is not far distant," wrote one editor, "when the whole territory of Pennsylvania will present nothing but a congregation of islands." The whole land was aflame with the fever of progress. Towns and cities grew up overnight.

About this time railroads began building, which, together with the canals, caused inflation in land values and speculation which cul-

minated in the terrible panic of 1837. In fact, the railroads followed as closely on the heels of the canals and cut the rates to such extent, that many of the canals didn't even have a chance to pay any dividends; consequently the large sums of money invested by individuals was gone and that invested by the states had to be made up by increase in taxes. By this time it had become plain that the railroads would supersede the canals and a quietus was put upon any more canal building.

Thus in 1812 were started proceedings which culminated in the formation of the Schuylkill Navigation Company. In that year Josiah White, of the Falls of Schuylkill, and others, presented a petition to the Legislature of Pennsylvania for an Act of Incorporation, but as the country was so engrossed, at this time, in the war with Great Britain, nothing was done.

On November 16th of the following year, a meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia, Montgomery and Berks Counties was held at the house of Jared Brooks in Norristown. General Francis Swayne was Chairman and Samuel Bayard, Secretary. Horatio Gates Jones of Roxborough; Levi Pawling of Norristown; General Joseph Heister and John Adams of Reading, and Samuel Baird of Pottsgrove, were the Committee. They urged the incorporation of a company to make lock navigation on the Schuylkill. Several meetings were held at various places. It took much work, however, to overcome the prejudice in the minds of conservative farmers against the scheme. They feared the overflow of their meadows and the increased height of freshets in the spring.

Finally on March 8th, 1815, the Act of Incorporation was signed by Governor Simon Snyder.<sup>1</sup> There were ten thousand shares at \$50 a share. The act provided that the work be divided into sections; the first, extending from Philadelphia to Reading and the second, from

Reading to Pottsville, Schuylkill Co., Pa. The work on these sections was to begin at the Philadelphia and Reading ends respectively and proceed upwards. Both sections were to be built simultaneously. It was provided that no toll was to be charged at any lock in either section until a corresponding lock in the other section had been completed. This was later rescinded.

The Act also provided that the dams should be at least 15 ft. in width, "so as to admit a safe passage for wagons over same, as a fording place." It further provided that the master of any boat, ark or other vessel, on arriving within a quarter of a mile of a lock, was required to blow a trumpet or horn under penalty of ten dollars; whereupon the lock keeper was to open the gate. If in failing to do so the lock tender caused the boatman a delay of more than thirty minutes, the Company was to pay the boatman one dollar for every thirty minutes' delay.

Mr. Cadwalader Evans was elected the first president. As the improvements on the Connecticut River were considered more of the nature of those on the Schuylkill, a committee was appointed, which went to Springfield, Mass., in October to view that work. There they met and interviewed the Engineer, Mr. Ariel Cooley.

Mr. Cooley attacked the provision of the Act of Incorporation, regarding the building of dams as fording places; pointing out the impossibilities of such a thing, as the guard lock at the head of each canal must be higher than the highest freshet and to cross this lock would require a bridge higher still to enable boats to pass under; whereupon the Act was amended, repealing this proviso.

Arrangements were made to have Mr. Cooley come to Philadelphia and look the situation over. He arrived on March 1st, 1816, and accompanied the committee up and down the river from Philadelphia to Pottsville. He recommended the building of Flat Rock Dam and the Flat Rock Canal, suggesting that the canal would afford many valuable seats for mills.

Agreeable to Mr. Cooley's suggestion, the Board signed a contract with Josiah White, proprietor of a wire factory at the Falls of Schuylkill, to erect a dam 20 inches high on the

<sup>1</sup> The commissioners appointed were Samuel Wetherill, Jr., Jonathan Williams, Samuel Richards, Robert Kennedy and Josiah White of the City of Philadelphia; Conrad Carpenter, Francis Deal and Joseph Starne of the County of Philadelphia; Levi Pauling, Matthias Holstine, Philip Hahn, Jesse Bean, Thomas Lowry, Andrew Todd, Joseph Potts, David Rutter and Amos Evans of the County of Montgomery; Lewis Wernwag, Joshua Malin, Enoch Walker, John Rinehart and John Heister, Jr., of the County of Chester; Lewis Rees, John S. Heister, John Wiley, James May, Jacob K. Boyer, John Brewer, Matthias Brooke, Robert Scott, Abraham Bailey and Abraham Wolf of the County of Berks; James McFarland, John Pott, Daniel Graeff, George Dreibilbus and John Mulowny of Schuylkill County.



crest of the Great Falls; a lock to be built across the channel at the west end; this work to be done at his expense; he to receive his compensation from the water power of this improvement. Josiah White completed this work in 1817. In the same year the Board contracted with Mr. Cooley to build Flat Rock Dam and the canal, which he completed early in 1819.

In the president's report of 1817, Mr. Evans speaks of the prospects and dwells at length on the rapid diminution of wood as fuel and on coal as a substitute; saying, "Happily this substitute is provided and within reach of our reasonable exertions at the headwaters of the Schuylkill, where coal exists in the utmost abundance and of the finest quality." He says, "As to its fitness for manufacture; those who please may be satisfied by inquiring of Henry Abbott, at his store and smithshop, 111 N. 2nd Street, Philadelphia, or of White & Hazard at their wire and nail factory at the Falls of Schuylkill."

"There were giants in those days and men of renown" and Josiah White was one of them. He and his partner, Erskine Hazard, had been using bituminous coal in their rolling mill, wire and nail factory, but on learning of the large deposits of anthracite coal at the head of the Schuylkill, they started to experiment with it. "They brought it down by teams at \$1.00 a bushel, or \$28.00 a ton. They spent \$300 in making experiments but could not succeed in making it burn. "The hands in the mill were heartily sick and tired of it and it was about being abandoned, when on a certain occasion, after they had been trying for a long time to make it burn without success, they became exasperated; threw a large quantity of the 'black stones,' as they called them, into the furnace; shut the doors and left the mill. It so happened that one of them had left his jacket in the mill, and in going there for it sometime after, he discovered a tremendous heat in the furnace,—the doors were red hot. He immediately called all hands and they ran through the rolls three separate heats of iron with that one fire." This was "the first practical useful use of our anthracite coal . . ."

In his report, Mr. Evans figures out, in detail,

the profits and the dividends to be derived from the coal trade. The story has appeared in print more than once, that in 1825, "when the first boat load of coal came down the Schuylkill Canal and reached the toll office at Reading, the collector had a schedule of toll rates on every known commodity of the region, even to a bushel of hickory nuts, but none on coal." Whoever fabricated this tale was certainly not familiar with the Schuylkill Canal, as it is not consistent with Mr. Evans' report published in 1817, scarcely a year after the operation was started.

The committee that went to visit the improvements on the Connecticut River also wrote to Thomas Eddy, Engineer of the improvements on the Mohawk River. In his reply, Mr. Eddy says, "When we began, the country was new and undeveloped, on which account we were obliged to send pork, corn and labourers from this city (New York)."

His placing the pork, the corn and the laborers in the positions he did, calls to mind an incident that happened on the Delaware & Chesapeake Canal back in the late 90s. The trip was made on the night boat, which left Philadelphia at 5 P. M. and arrived at Baltimore at 7 the following morning. The boats had the reputation, that if one occupied a berth in them, he was liable to carry home a particular kind of live stock that he hadn't taken with him. As the destination was Town Point, on the Elk River, at which the boat arrived at 1.30 A. M., it was decided to sit up on deck. At 1 A. M. the boat sailed slowly into the lock at Chesapeake City. It was pitch dark and very quiet. Nothing could be seen but the lock tender and his lantern. The terrible grind of the steering gear broke the silence now and then as the boat was being warped into the lock. Finally, as she came to a stop, the Captain bawled out, in a gruff voice, "What 'a you got?"

The lock tender drawled back, "A barrel, a mule and a lady."

In 1819, Josiah White and Joseph Gillingham sold all their right of water power at the Great Falls to the City of Philadelphia for \$150,000 and the Navigation Company agreed

to permit the City to erect a dam at Fairmount. On completion of the dam, the City was to remove the dam at the Falls, "except the guard wall." Fairmount Dam was completed in 1822. The guard wall, at the Falls of Schuylkill, may still be seen built into the west bank of the river; while the Great Falls, at this point, lies submerged beneath the surface of the stream.

By 1820, many unforeseen obstacles had been met and overcome, but there was still much to be done; almost all of the original \$500,000 had been spent, whereupon \$200,000 more was called for. This amount was subscribed for, although the stock at that time was selling at 20% below par.

In 1822, a great freshet occurred which did much damage to the works. In 1823, the work was still unfinished and "the company found itself in a state of such pressing embarrassment that serious apprehensions were entertained that the whole work would be suspended." While in this state of despondency, Stephen Girard came forward and loaned the company \$230,840.

Finally on October 1, 1825, "after 10 years of incessant toil," the canal was completed and opened from Pottsville to Philadelphia.

Their Engineer, Thomas Oaks, died the year the canal was opened. His death was much lamented by his colleagues. Mr. Joseph S. Lewis was elected president the following year.

A partial list of the articles, which passed down the canal, during the first year of operation, were: Coal, live hogs, whiskey, nuts and lumber, and among those, that passed up, were: Store goods, empty kegs and hogsheads, household furniture, melons and other vegetables, oysters and seafish.

Packet lines were established in 1826 to carry passengers. The fare to Reading was \$2.50. A packet boat, as described by an early chronicler, resembled "a small Noah's Ark—a houseboat whose only deck was on the roof. Right in the bow, carefully cut off from the rest of the boat, was a tiny cuddy for the crew. Next back of this came the ladies' dressing room and cabin, sometimes a separate room, sometimes cut off from the main cabin only by a red curtain. Next was

the main cabin 36 to 45 feet long, which was the saloon and dining room by day and men's sleeping quarters at night. Back of this was the bar and finally at the very stern was the kitchen, almost always presided over by a negro cook, who was usually the bartender also. He was kept busy fifteen or sixteen hours a day."

"This canal travelling," says one traveller, "is pleasant enough by daytime, but sleeping is awful . . . The sleepers are packed away on narrow shelves fastened to the side of the boat, like dead pigs in a Cincinnati pork warehouse. We go to bed at 9 o'clock and get up when we are told."

"Some of the passengers," writes another, "gathered around the master of the boat at one of the tables, drawing lots with all the anxieties and passions of gamblers: while others with small pieces of cardboard in their hands were groping among the shelves in search of numbers corresponding with those they had drawn. As soon as any gentleman found his number he took possession of it immediately by undressing himself and crawling into bed. The rapidity with which an agitated gambler subsides into a snoring slumberer was one of the most singular effects I ever witnessed.

"Mattresses completely covered the floor, on which people lay as close as possible. The dinner table was covered with sleeping humanity more thickly than Captain Davis ever strewed it with beefsteaks and those who lay under the table thought themselves favored, inasmuch as they could not be trodden upon.

"No one took off all his clothes on a canal boat. Most men removed their shoes, coats and waistcoats, some of their collars and cravats, while a few fastidious nincompoops even took off their trousers; but they were exceptions.

"The lamp shed a dim light over the sleepers and all went well until someone—and there was always someone—began to snore. Sn-a-a-w—aw—poof! They would turn uneasily and try to compose themselves to slumber again. No use. Sn-a-a-w—poof! 'D——— that fellow! Chuck him in the ribs, somebody and make him turn over! Is this thing to go on forever? Gentlemen, are you going to stand this all night?



If you are, I'm not. I'm going to get up and dress. Who is he, anyhow? No gentleman would or could snore in that way!

"In the early morning: the odors of the breakfast food were mingled with those of gin, whiskey, brandy and rum from the bar, with a decided seasoning of stale tobacco . . . Nor was the atmosphere quite free from zephyr whisperings of the thirty beds which had just been cleared away, and of which we were further and more pressingly reminded by the occasional appearance on the tablecloth of a kind of game not mentioned in the Bill-of-Fare.

"The bar was small, but vigorous and healthy. 'Is life worth living?' was answered very satisfactorily, methought, as I watched the Virginians at their juleps: 'Gentlemen, your very good health'; 'Colonel, my respects to you'; 'My regards, Judge. When shall I see you again at my house? Can't you stop now and stay a little while, even if it is only for a week or two?' Judge to the barkeeper, 'Sam, duplicate those drinks.' "

The business increased rapidly; that of '27 was 50% more than '26. The Union Canal, at Reading, was completed in 1827. This added more business to the Schuylkill Navigation. In 1829, Mr. Cadwalader Evans, the first president, was presented with a silver vase by the stockholders, "as a testimony of their respect and gratitude for his long-continued, faithful and laborious services." In 1831, a committee called on Stephen Girard to express the thanks of the Stockholders and to request him to sit for his portrait. "He expressed his sensibility upon the occasion but declined sitting for his portrait as inconsistent with his feelings and general determination."

The coal business of '31, doubled that of '30, and that of '32 doubled '31. In 1833, each of the managers, who had served for seven years, was presented with a silver service costing \$500 each.<sup>1</sup> In 1834, Secretary and Treasurer Thomas Harper, died and his widow was presented with \$1000, "In consideration of the long and faithful services of her husband." Mr. Joshua

Lippincott was elected President in 1835.

The trade was increasing beyond all expectations. The predictions of 1817 and 1820 fell far short of realization. In 1837 over 500,000 tons of coal were brought down. 400 boats were dispatched from the coal regions in one week during this year. The dividends increased from 7% in 1829, to 24½% in 1837. The stock rose to \$180 a share.

The company reached the zenith of its prosperity in 1837; in the meantime, however, weak and faulty original construction had to be remedied and the increased trade called for improvements. Not long after opening, it was found that the canal at Reading leaked so badly that 3 dams, 8 locks and a mile of canal had to be built and the old leaky canal abandoned. On completion of the Union Canal it was found that the locks did not permit the boats to pass through fast enough, so all the locks between Philadelphia and Reading were doubled; thus permitting boats, going up and down the river, to pass through at the same time. During the dry season there was not enough water to float the boats, so in 1832, Tumbling Run Dam was built at Pottsville. At the beginning the canal had been built only 3 feet deep and for boats of but 25 tons burden, so in 1834, the depth was increased to 4 feet to accommodate boats of 60 tons.

Unfortunately, instead of paying small dividends and paying for these improvements out of the income, loans were floated for which interest had to be paid.

By 1837, the work had cost almost three and a half million dollars, of which less than half was capital stock and the balance loans. In 1838, the dividends were reduced to 21½%. In 1839, a bad freshet occurred which cost \$31,000 to repair the damage. Flat Rock Dam had to be rebuilt this year and the dividends were cut to 19%; however, the trade was increasing rapidly; shipments of coal to New York via Delaware & Raritan Canal were started this year and the company would have recovered from all these setbacks had not a rival for the trade appeared—the Reading Railroad.

The Reading Railroad Company was incor-

<sup>1</sup> Those participating were Manuel Eyre, Dr. Jonas Preston, Thomas Firth, Joshua Lippincott and Lindsay Nicholson.

porated in 1833 for the purpose of conveying passengers and the transportation of the mail, goods and merchandise between Philadelphia and Reading. A pamphlet published by the company, at the time the subscription books were opened, said, "The present number of persons now passing daily between Philadelphia and Reading is believed to be not less than 50 by the different lines of stages. The friends of this improvement are decidedly of the opinion that it will not diminish the revenue of the Canal Company." This pamphlet concludes by saying, "We have but to add that we conceive the system of railroads is but to act a friendly part towards the canals of our State." However, in 1837, the railroad acquired the franchise of the Little Schuylkill Navigation Railroad & Coal Co. and the Norristown & Mt. Carbon Railroad Co. to extend its lines to Pottsville, and had its charter amended to permit it to carry coal.

The work on the railroad was begun in 1835. In 1838, it was opened for the conveyance of passengers from Reading to Norristown. In 1839, Flat Rock Tunnel was completed and the road opened from Philadelphia to Reading.

Foreseeing that something would happen, and presumably to retain its trade in the event of competition by the railroad, the Navigation Company reduced its toll in 1839 from \$1.68 a ton, from Pottsville to Philadelphia, to \$.90.

In 1841, another freshet occurred doing damage to the extent of \$81,000. Scarcely had the damage been repaired when another one occurred. By this time the cost had increased to about \$4,000,000. The toll was cut to \$.75 a ton. The dividends were reduced to 8% and the stock fell to \$64 a share.

On January 13, 1842, the railroad was completed from Philadelphia to Pottsville.

In spite of the fact that in this year the canal carried almost as much coal as it did in its banner year '37, when it paid 241½% dividends, the tolls were cut to \$.54 a ton and the dividends reduced to 3%.

The volume of coal carried by the railroad increased and that of the canal decreased. In '43, the dividend was passed altogether. Things became desperate. Prizes were offered for the

boat carrying the largest load of coal and the most loads. The prize this year was won by the "President," Captain Warner, which carried 71 tons 9 cwt., and incidentally grounded seven times on the way down. Mr. Solomon Roberts was elected president.

In 1844, the railroad carried more coal than was carried by the canal. The dividend was again passed and the stock fell to \$34. While the two companies were trying to strangle each other, they were choking themselves. Mr. John Croyder, president of the railroad, in his report in 1844, says, "The finances at the commencement of last year were in a state of great embarrassment."

Pamphlets were published by the railroad throwing mud at the canal, and similar ones were published by the canal throwing it back at the railroad. One of these pamphlets, published by the railroad, after bitterly denouncing President Joshua Lippincott, says, "Do the directors of the Schuylkill Navigation Company mean that those engaged in the Reading Railroad, men standing high in the community for correct judgment and prudent foresight, knowing as they did before undertaking the work, the capability of the Schuylkill Navigation; having spent their time and embarked their capital, to the extent of five millions of dollars, in a work which when finished will not accomplish the object of its projectors?"

"If so, then they must wait until convinced by dire experience, when they shall see the whole coal trade of the Schuylkill region descending by the Reading Railroad." It concludes with large capital letters,

"MAY NOT THE PUBLIC LOOK FOR THE COMPLETE AND ENTIRE EXPLOSION OF THIS CONCERN OF TWENTY-FOUR AND ONE-HAL PER CENT ANNUAL DIVIDEND NOTORITY.

"ALAS, POOR NAVIGATION COMPANY! HOW HAVE THE MIGHTY FALLEN!"

Another one, after viciously attacking Mr. John Sergeant, one of the managers, ends in the same manner:



"SHE NOW SINKS, NEVER TO RISE AGAIN. ALAS, POOR NAVIGATION COMPANY, THE AUTOCRAT OF THE DAY!"

The fight was on. In 1844, the Navigation Company reduces its toll to \$.36 a ton. The coal carried by the railroad increased to 635,000 tons while the canal fell to 400,000. Again the dividend was passed. By this time the canal had cost \$4,000,000. It was sinking deeper and deeper. In 1845, the railroad carried over 800,000 tons while the canal fell to 263,000.

A council of war was held. Something drastic had to be done. Chas. Ellet and Edward Miller, Civil Engineers, were employed to investigate the situation.

They reported that by widening and deepening the canal, and building new locks to accommodate boats of 180 tons burden, propelled by steam, that the capacity of the canal could be increased three times. The cost was figured at \$1,080,000; navigation would have to be closed during the season of 1846, but when finished, the tolls could be reduced to \$.30 a ton, or less, and produce a net annual revenue equal to or 36% of the capital.

Things had come to a crisis. The die was cast. The management determined "to control the whole of the Schuylkill trade, both now and for years, if not ages hereafter." A loan of \$1,250,000 was floated. The works were shut down during the season of 1846. The canal was widened to an average width of 70 feet and 6 feet deep; new locks were built 110 feet long by 18 feet wide and 120 boats were built to carry 180 tons each, but steam was not introduced until later. Chas. W. Ellet, Jr., Civil Engineer, was elected president. The work was done under the most discouraging circumstances. Everything seemed to combine to "baffle their efforts and disappoint their well-grounded expectations." Finally the work was completed, but the cost of the enlargement had increased the liabilities to almost \$6,000,000. In the meantime the coal shipment by the railroad had increased to 1,200,000 tons.

In 1847, payments on loans were suspended. In the settlement with the creditors, the floating debt was liquidated by an issue of certificates

of loan at a discount of 50% and the total investment swelled to \$8,400,000.

Mr. Frederick Fraley was elected president in 1848. Competition kept up at the same ruinous rates. The only one that benefited was the public. Payments were suspended again and new settlements were made at more sacrifices. By this time the two companies, seeing the futility of such competition, agreed to "bury the hatchet."

In 1850, occurred the largest freshet hitherto recorded, the damage of which was scarcely repaired when a second one occurred: 2 dams were washed away and 23 damaged; but as every cloud has a silver lining, this cloud had one also. The Railroad Company came to the assistance of the Canal Company by "promptly tendering all the facilities the road afforded for the transit of materials and tools required for repairs," and presented the company with free tickets to enable their engineers and superintendents to pass over the road during the reconstruction. The thanks of the board was officially voted to Mr. Tucker, the President of the railroad, "for his prompt and valuable kindness," and a bond of friendship was established between the two rivals, where hatred had existed before.

The damage wrought by the flood, combined with the loss of business caused thereby, forced the Canal Company into the hands of a receiver and the liabilities swelled to the enormous sum of \$10,400,000.

It's a long lane that has no turn, and in '52 this lane also turned. In this year the coal tonnage exceeded that of any previous year—namely: 800,000 tons, and continued to increase each year until 1855, when it hauled 1,105,000 tons and it paid its first dividend since 1842; however, paying dividends only deferred the payment of the floating debt, so it was decided thenceforth to pay the dividends in preferred stock. The business continued to increase and in 1860, it paid 6% in preferred stock.

By 1863, the two companies had become so thick as to open negotiations for "a more perfect union and harmony." Equal rates were established and an agreement was made whereby

if one carried more coal than the other during the year, it was to pay the one carrying the lesser amount, \$.25 a ton on the excess. In modern parlance this would be called "a combination in restraint of

trade." In 1864, the Railroad Company paid the Canal Company \$125,000 on this account. In this year the Canal Company gave to President Fraley, 200 shares of preferred stock, in recognition of his efforts in extricating it from its difficulties and placing it on a firm financial basis. The Company continued to prosper under his guidance and in '64 was able to pay dividends on its preferred and common stock. Shipments exceeded 1,000,000 tons of coal each year until '69, when, on the 4th of October of that year, occurred a freshet worse than those of '39 and '50, damaging the works to the extent of \$57,000.

By 1870, the liabilities of the Company amounted to almost \$14,000,000. A strike among the miners cut the coal trade in half; a large amount of interest was due on the 1st of July, and it looked as though it was again headed for the rocks, but negotiations for the leasing of the Navigation Company to the Reading Railroad, which had been going on for sometime during these prosperous years, were consummated on June 23, 1870. The railroad agreed to pay \$650,000 annual rental for a term of 999 years, which after the interest on loans, bonds, mortgages, etc., and current expenses had been paid, would yield 3% on the preferred stock and 1½% on the common.

The following resolutions were adopted at that meeting: "That we the Stockholders and Loanholders of the Schuylkill Navigation Company hereby tender to the President, Managers and Officers of the Company our sincere and hearty thanks for their diligent and faithful



*Last of the Canal Boats*

attention to our interests during many years of difficulty and disaster and for the favorable arrangement they have made for the lease of our property to the Philadelphia & Railroad Company and in

transferring our rights and franchises to that Corporation and we are proud to say that no taint or stain can be found upon the history of our Company from its commencement to the present time."

Thus passed the Schuylkill Navigation Company, as an individual company, independently striving for its existence: Its subsequent history, under the lease of the Reading Railroad, is another story.

During the lease with the Reading Railroad, the canal trade constantly diminished, on account of the more economical and speedy transportation by rail. It dwindled to such extent that in the late '90's an early 1900's, only an occasional boat passed through the canal or up and down the river. Finally it simmered down to nothing.

The last boat was locked through in 1916.

The days of this romantic means of travel and transportation are gone; it is too slow. No more is heard the tinkle of mule bells; mules do not go fast enough. A railroad—the Venice Branch—now monopolizes the towpath along the Manayunk Canal; speed and more speed is the slogan!

Shortly after the canal opened, the following instructions were published concerning the manipulation of a boat coming down on Flat Rock Dam: "Run out to the middle by bracing with poles; then turn down and run in the middle to the ferry at Spring Mills—run on the left hand of the island, about 60 feet from it; then turn to the west side of the river, at the lower point of the island—then incline a little toward the



middle of the river—to within 100 yards of the second island—then cross over toward the tow path . . .”

Those who enjoyed boating and swimming in the dam, in the old days, will, no doubt, remember the cumbersome old boats turning out from the east shore at Spring Mill; rounding some submerged rocks and swinging slowly back to the towpath again. What fun it was, in the old days, to swim out in the river; board the boats—provided the captain was an amiable fellow—bask on deck in the sun, or dive off the bow and climb up on the boat again at the stern.

A more pleasant place for boating, swimming and picnicking could not be found than Flat Rock Dam, back in the '90's; with high, steep, wooded hills on both sides, the placid stream, and trees along both banks. Of course the railroad whistles were not so pleasant: With two railroads, on one side and one on the other; many bends; trains coming both ways and every train blowing its whistle at every bend. It cannot be said that it was altogether quiet. Frank L———, who had a boat shop on the west shore, at Lafayette, called his boat-slip “Whistleberg Landing.” Frank divided his time between playing the banjo and building boats, but he spent more time at the former than he did at the latter.

On the west shore, near the upper end of the island, were some large, smooth, round rocks, beneath an overhanging tree; a clean place to

put your clothes; the water six or eight feet deep; a hop-stop-and-a-jump, and in you go. From this rock up to the bend at Spring Mill, a distance of half a mile, was a cove, the bank of which was lined, the entire distance, with large overhanging maple trees, placed, as it were, equidistantly apart. This bank, covered with grass, was about a foot above the surface of the stream; the water ran in under the edge of it and around the overhanging roots of the trees, making it very convenient to step into or out of a boat. Along about 1900, the Reading Railroad ruthlessly cut all these trees down; filled this cove in with dirt, on a straight line, from the rock to the bend; built a high wall to retain the dirt and laid tracks on top of the fill for the storage of coal cars, thus destroying, for all time, this delightfully romantic trysting place.—Out with the old! In with the new! The right of eminent domain! Let the boys swim in indoor pools! Let them row on machines in a gymnasium? Why worry?

The construction of the canal is still in good condition, but both it and the river channel have become so filled with silt and coal dirt that only boats of very light draft can pass through, such as small motorboats, rowboats and canoes. Recently a suggestion was made to fill the Manayunk Canal up and convert it into a boulevard. If this suggestion is adopted, all traces will be obliterated of the motive, the impulse and the *raison d'être* of that famous, unique and ancient town of Manayunk.







*Roman Catholic Church of St. John the Baptist, Manayunk*







*The Leverington Presbyterian Church.*



*Entrance to Memorial Hospital.*



*The William B. Stephens Memorial Library.*





*Manayunk Branch, The Free Library of Philadelphia  
Fleming and Dupont Streets.*



*Wissahickon Branch, The Free Library of Philadelphia  
Manayunk Avenue and Osborne Street.*



## A SUPPLEMENT TO THE HISTORY OF ROXBOROUGH, MANAYUNK AND WISSAHICKON

by WILLIAM H. COOPER

Certain matters remain to be emphasized in the light of the current anniversary and a number of facts should be added in order to bring this history down to date. The present writer has been charged with this responsibility and gladly offers the following pages, regretting only that the limitations of time and the necessity of publishing this volume according to schedule have made it impossible to go into greater detail. I have been helped in the section on the First Paper Mill and David Rittenhouse by Mr. James F. Magee, Jr. of Philadelphia, who has made a special study of early paper manufacturing in America. For the most part these sections and the one which follows on Thomas Shaw are merely a marshalling of facts already published elsewhere. The material covering the last twenty years of the community's history is the result of the present writer's own researches. The particular accounts of local organizations and institutions have been provided by their respective officers while I have been responsible for their editing and arrangement. The ready cooperation of so many individuals and groups has made the preparation of this part of the work a pleasure.

I wish also to acknowledge the kind assistance rendered by Miss Agnes Kelso of the Manayunk Branch of the Free Library, Mr. William Pepper, Jr., of the Free Library of Philadelphia, Mr. William Stroud, and Mr. A. H. Magonigle. The two last named worked carefully with me through the local newspaper files since 1918.

### THE FIRST PAPER MILL IN AMERICA

Among the pioneers of Roxborough was a Mennonite minister from Amsterdam named William Rittenhouse (Rittenhauser) who had been born in 1644 at Muehlheim am Ruhr in Rhenish Prussia. He had become a minister of the Mennonite persuasion before leaving Germany, spending some years subsequently in the

Netherlands, first at Arnhem and then in Amsterdam, where on June 23, 1678 he became a Dutch citizen. His citizenship papers mention that he was a paper maker. His removal to North America occurred in 1688. He came first to Germantown where he joined the little group of Mennonites who had settled there five years previously and became their minister. Turning his attention to business while continuing to exercise his ministry, Rittenhouse joined to himself three partners, Robert Turner, Thomas Tresse, and William Bradford, and leased from Samuel Carpenter twenty acres of land in Roxborough Township for the purpose of erecting a paper mill, the lease to run for 999 years. Here on Paper Mill Run, near the Wissahickon Creek, there was built in 1690 the first paper mill in America. This mill was swept away by a flood in 1700 or 1701 during William Penn's second visit to America. Penn asked the people to lend aid to the sufferers in this misfortune. In 1702 Rittenhouse and his partners built a second mill a little farther down stream. Eventually a third mill was built opposite the Rittenhouse dwelling which still stands beside the Wissahickon in Fairmount Park. The last mill, like the others, has long since vanished. It is estimated that the first paper mill was situated three hundred and fifty feet above the Rittenhouse dwelling and on the other side of the creek. A large rock with holes in it marks to this day the foundation of what may have been either the first or the second mill at that location. At present, plans are under way by which the Works Progress Administration will undertake to reconstruct the original mill. We have, however, no exact knowledge of what it looked like or of the materials out of which it was built. All pictorial representations of the first mill are guesses at the truth.

In 1704 William Bradford, one of the Rittenhouse partners, who was also the first printer

in the Middle Colonies (Philadelphia, 1685), sold his share to William Rittenhouse and his son Klaas (Nicholas). By 1706, father and son had purchased the holdings of the other partners and had become the sole proprietors. The watermark of their paper was a clover leaf with the letters "WR" and the word "Pensylvania." In 1707 the Rittenhouses built the dwelling to which we have already referred. On February 17, 1708 William Rittenhouse died. He will always be remembered not only as the first minister and bishop of the Mennonite Church in the Western World but also as the pioneer paper manufacturer in America. After William's death, his son Klaas succeeded him in the ministry and also carried on the paper business. He married Wilhelmina Dewees. Klaas was born in 1666 and died in 1734. He had a younger brother, Gerhard (Garret) and a sister, Elizabeth, both born before the family came to America.

#### DAVID RITTENHOUSE

The most famous member of the numerous and distinguished Rittenhouse family is of especial interest to us because he is a native of Roxborough Township. This was David Rittenhouse, born in the homestead at Paper Mill Run on April 8, 1732. He was the great grandson of William Rittenhouse and the grandson of Klaas and the third of the ten children of Matthias Rittenhouse and Elizabeth Williams. Although he lived in Roxborough only in his childhood and grew up after the age of eight on his father's farm in Montgomery County, we may justly claim him as our own and we shall always be proud of his name. Without a formal education, he became one of the foremost men of science of the eighteenth century and, in America, ranks second to Benjamin Franklin in his time! Inheriting from his maternal uncle a chest of books and tools when he was twelve years old, David became intensely interested in mathematics and astronomy. When he was only nineteen, he opened an instrument shop on the farm and began to make clocks. He was introduced to prominent men in Philadelphia by his brother-in-law, the Rev. Thomas

Barton, an Episcopalian clergyman, and at the age of thirty-two he completed a boundary survey for Pennsylvania. His subsequent surveys involved half of the original colonies.

Among David Rittenhouse's scientific achievements was the construction of an orrery or mechanical model to represent and illustrate the motions of the bodies of the solar system including the eclipses of the sun and moon. Rittenhouse's orrery was built to demonstrate the eclipses over a period of five thousand years, either past or future. He presented this remarkable piece of work to Princeton College and made another for the University of Pennsylvania. The Princeton orrery has been lost, but the one given to our local University is still in existence and may be seen at the Franklin Institute to which it has been loaned for exhibition. Thomas Jefferson wrote concerning this work of Rittenhouse: "He has not indeed made a world; but he has by imitation approached nearer to its Maker than any man who has lived from creation to this day."

As an astronomer, David Rittenhouse became an international figure when in 1769 he planned and carried through with brilliant success the first completely satisfactory observation of the transit of Venus across the sun's surface. Upon the conclusion of this important task he is said to have fainted from excitement. This can be accounted for by a physically delicate constitution which sometimes limited but never daunted him. On June 24, 1778 he made the first careful observation of an eclipse of the sun to be conducted in the British colonies of America. In 1793 he discovered a comet. Among those for whom he prepared and made instruments was George Washington. He held office from 1777 until 1789 as Treasurer of Pennsylvania and in 1792 became the first director of the United States Mint at Philadelphia. He was elected President of the American Philosophical Society in 1791. He reached the height of his fame in 1795 when the Royal Society of London, scarcely a dozen years after we had been at war with England, chose him as one of its foreign members.



He married his first wife, Eleanor Colston, a Quakeress, in 1766, before moving from Montgomery County to Philadelphia. His second wife, Hanna Jacobs, whom he married in 1772, died of cholera in June, 1796. Rittenhouse himself, who had been in ill health for months, died four days after her, on June 26, 1796. He was distinguished not only by his rare genius but also by his extreme modesty and in character as well as in achievement his life remains a challenge to the youth of today with their greatly superior advantages.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Carl van Doren in his recent biography of Benjamin Franklin points out that in one respect Rittenhouse was in advance of Franklin. The latter had no confidence that steam power would ever be practically applied. Rittenhouse believed in the possibilities of Fitch's steamboat. See *Benjamin Franklin* (New York, 1938) page 769.



## EARLY PAPER MAKING IN AMERICA<sup>2</sup>

Time was when paper was not one of the bare necessities of life. Back in the infant years of our country, pioneers had more important things on their minds—and hands—than making the medium for informing posterity about them. There were other tasks—conquering the wilderness and the Indians—that took much time and energy. Breaking the soil for crops and setting up homes in the new land did not call for paper. It was not yet a vital necessity. Newspapers did not even exist in the colonies until after 1700. There were few books, and most of those were made in England. The printing output was small. Correspondence was not extensive, and was limited to bills of trade and other official communications. Even the starting of the first paper mill in 1690 does not seem to have been the result of any urgent call from the community. It came out merely from the combination of the small needs of a single printer in Philadelphia and the ambitions of a newly arrived German papermaker.

The actual beginning of the new enterprise was in Philadelphia—the seat of so many beginnings—in 1690 when Robert Turner, William Bradford, Thomas Tresse, and William Ritting-

huysen (now spelled Rittenhouse) entered into an agreement with one another and with one Samuel Carpenter for the lease of a tract of land of twenty acres in Roxborough on a little stream called Paper Mill Run which empties into the Wissahickon about two miles above its junction with the Schuylkill. The mill itself was built in the same year. William Rittenhouse was a practical man, and he alone was able to make the mill succeed. So naturally he eventually became the sole owner. But William Bradford was the moving spirit of the enterprise, mainly because he had the distinction of being the first important American printer and publisher. Once he was started in his very lucrative business in New York he felt the inconvenience of depending on paper from Europe. For the ocean was a great deal wider in those days before the steamship and airplane. So he naturally turned toward the domestic enterprise. His position placed him in intimate association with leading men of the colonies, and especially of Philadelphia. And there is no doubt but that he was influential in bringing the necessary monetary support to the undertaking.

At this first mill a very fair quality of paper was manufactured out of the pulp made from rags of home-grown flax. As the colonists had no other paper mill for fully twenty years, the enterprise was a profitable one. In a modest way, it was a success from the start, and went well until its first misfortune. In 1701 a freshet overran the banks of the Wissahickon and the mill was swept away.

A new mill was built the very next year a short distance from the site of the old one. William Rittenhouse continued to own the mill until his death, when it was taken over by his son, Claus—who thus became the second papermill proprietor in the colonies. He continued to make writing, printing, brown and blue papers, and pasteboard. At his death the mill went to his eldest son, William, whose brother, Matthias, carried on manufacturing there until 1730. In subsequent generations the mill was reconstructed in part or in whole several times, but it always continued to be used as a paper

<sup>2</sup> This essay was forwarded for inclusion in this book by Mr. Joseph Dunton.

mill. Finally it was submitted to the inglorious fate of becoming a cotton mill. But later, it was reglorified when its site was incorporated into Philadelphia's famous Fairmount Park.

In later generations a third mill was built farther down on Paper Mill Run by the third William Rittenhouse, and other mills were erected in the same vicinity—one on Paper Mill Run and two on Wissahickon Creek. All of them were operated by members of the Rittenhouse family. All of them made paper by the only method known in those days—by hand—a laborious and costly process in which each sheet was made separately and for which several days were required to finish one dry perfected sheet. Most, if not all, of the paper made in the Rittenhouse mill was watermarked.

Among the employes of the Rittenhouse mill was one Henry Katz who, like the enterprising young men that he was, gained much from his occupation and in time built his own mill on a little stream called Trout Run, which flows into the Schuylkill at the point where the W. C. Hamilton & Sons' mill stands today. That was not until the latter part of the 18th century, but it was there that Mr. Katz started out in business for himself. And a profitable business it was, too. The mill is a thing of the past now, but the ruins of the lovely, big homestead with the capstone bearing his initials may be seen today.

Twenty years after the establishment of the first paper mill in the colonies, competition set in in the form of a direct outgrowth of the Rittenhouse mill. The new mill was built in 1710 by William de Wees, a brother-in-law of Nicholas Rittenhouse, one of the sons of the first paper maker. He built his mill in close proximity to that of his rival—on the west side of the Wissahickon in that part of Germantown known as Crefield. His son, Henry de Wees, succeeded him as paper maker. Henry became famous for helping the cause of the revolution by making cartridge paper for the continental army.

Nearly forty years elapsed before another paper mill appeared on the horizon. This was

in the township of Concord, twenty miles from Philadelphia, in that part of Chester county which afterwards was Delaware county. The father of this brilliant enterprise was Thomas Willcox, an Englishman, who had come to Concord in 1725 or earlier. In 1726 he and Thomas Brown constructed a mill-dam on the west branch of Chester Creek and in August, 1729 they built a paper mill and formed a partnership to make and sell paper. Since he had learned paper making before coming to America, arrangements were made to the effect that Willcox should get three-fifths of the profits in consideration of instructing Brown, who knew nothing about the business. Little is known of the history of this mill during its first fifty years. When Brown retired from active participation in the business in 1732 he leased to Willcox his half interest in the land, mill, and equipment for seven years. Subsequently he reconveyed his interest to Willcox, who thus became the sole owner of the famous Ivy Mill. This and other adjacent property have remained in the possession of descendants of Thomas Willcox until the present day.

Thomas was succeeded by his son Mark in 1772. After 1808 he had his sons associated with him, the last surviving one inheriting the property and continuing the business until 1854. One of the paper makers who worked at the old Ivy Mill was W. C. Hamilton, who eventually branched out on his own and in 1863 established the paper mill at Miquon which bears his name today.

The first output of the Willcox mill was fuller's press board. Later they made printing paper, some of which was for Benjamin Franklin, who became a close friend of Willcox and was always much interested in the undertaking. After 1775 the mill was devoted almost entirely to making government papers for continental bills, loan certificates and bills of exchange. Ultimately its product was principally banknote paper for the United States and for the various states, for banks, foreign countries, and for private individuals. At the time of the revolution and before, the government authorities de-



pendent entirely on this mill for paper for currency purposes, and placed implicit confidence in it. John Hill Martin, in his *History of Chester and Its Vicinity*, said: "When the old colonies found themselves obliged to issue paper money, the currency paper used by all of them was manufactured by Thomas Willcox at Ivy Mills, and mostly printed in Philadelphia. No other currency paper was used upon the continent than that made at the old Ivy Mills. Many years later, in the necessities of the newly confederated states, the paper for all the continental currency was supplied from the same establishment. There was no other possessing experience in the manufacture, and during the revolutionary war, paper could not be imported. Again, in the war of 1812, the government was obliged to issue paper money, and again recourse was had to the old Ivy Mills to supply its necessities."

These three little mills alone represented the sum total of the infant paper industry until well into the second quarter of the 18th century. A growing need for paper existed, but conditions were unfavorable to the expansion of the business. In the first place there was a scarcity of skilled workmen. There was an even greater scarcity of rags. It was difficult to procure even the simple tools that were needed, and they were might expensive. In the second place, the domestic market was very irregular, and altogether the cost of production was relatively so high that a better quality of imported paper could be sold for no more than that of domestic make. In the third place, there was the constant opposition of the mother country, who in her efforts to maintain a "favorable balance of trade" of exports over imports, curtailed any efforts of the colonists in the field of manufacturing.

So, with such hindrances, paper making did not keep up with paper using. Despite the starting of a few mills, the scarcity of paper was more and more decidedly felt in all parts of the country from 1700 on. Public needs increased with the growth of population and the resultant social, industrial and commercial ex-

pansions. Importations were not easy nor voluminous, and most were very costly. This was especially true of paper. England couldn't supply the colonial market, which continued to be starved. And the colonies couldn't supply their own market, for the domestic mills were so few in number and so limited in capacity that they were far from able to make up the deficiency. The stamp act of 1765 and the Townshend measures in 1767, which placed duties on glass, paper, pasteboard, lead, painters' colors, and tea only aggravated the economic situation. Naturally the newspapers suffered most. Sometimes the regular issues had to be omitted. Sometimes they were printed on various sizes and shapes and colors and kinds of paper. Printed matter was squeezed into the margins. Damaged, torn, and imperfect paper was repaired and pasted together and used.

With the war, there were new calls for paper—for official purposes—correspondence, military and legal orders, documents, records, news, broadsides, political paper,s sermons, and especially for cartridge paper. The demand increased. And there was no one to manufacture the paper.

And even after the end of the war, there was still a scarcity of paper. During the first one hundred years of its existence, American paper making was a feeble industry. But gradually it made advances. Improvements in machinery and processes were slow in coming, but they did come. Manufacturing after the revolution along all lines was increased and encouraged by national policies. So new mills began to spring up. They centered in the old home fields in the counties around Philadelphia. There were the Lenni Mills of John Lungren on Chester Creek, the Aaron Matson Mill on Chester Creek, the William Trimble Mill in Concord Township, the Morris Trueman Mill on Darby Creek, and the Henry Katz Mill on Trout Run. Henry Katz had a daughter. Henry Katz also had an apprentice whose name was John Hagey. The story goes that the young employe distinguished himself by his ingenuity and intelli-

gence and won the heart of the proprietor's beautiful daughter. And so they were married. And since he was a very enterprising young man, he took his wife down the stream and built his own paper mill, right on the site of the home of the present superintendent of the W. C. Hamilton & Sons' Mills. He built his house in 1792, and it still stands on Manor Road, across from the present property of the Hamilton plant. Manor Road, by the way, originally was surveyed and projected by William Penn to connect his Manor house at Bristol with his possessions on the Schuylkill River.

But the mill was not always to remain the property of John Hagey. There was another young man who had worked at the famous Willcox Ivy Mill in Glen Riddle, who also conceived the notion of building his own business. His name was W. C. Hamilton, and in 1863 he took over the site of the Hagey plant on Trout Run, and established a company with his sons that has continued a flourishing business to this day. When it began, the mill manufactured only 100% rag paper, but gradually during the intervening years the establishment has been modernized until today it makes a wide variety of papers—among them the nationally known Hamilton Bond, Hamilton Ledger, Mimeo-pen Bond, Montgomery Offset, and many high quality book papers. The W. C. Hamilton Company has grown and improved, keeping pace with the times.

Mr. Hamilton was extremely lucky in establishing his business when he did, for it came into being just a few years before the invention of the manufacture of paper from wood pulp. So no longer would there be the need for the mad scramblings and frantic headaches over the scarcity of rags. Paper could be made from

other things beside rags. And so the company has continued, growing with an eye to the future, but with its roots firmly entrenched in the stability of the past.

As a symbol of that historic background, there is the famous water-mark of Hamilton papers—the goose quill, the symbol of the name of William Penn. When the great founder of Philadelphia was conversing with the Indians through an interpreter, he asked for their names. They were translated into English as "Big Man Afraid of His Horse" or "Little Fast Runner" or "Black Hawk." The Indians in turn, asked for the name of William Penn, but the interpreter could not translate it into the Indian language, because of the lack of equivalent words. Finally, the interpreter, seeing a goose quill on the ground, pointed to it and said in the Indian language, "Onas," signifying a quill or pen. But his familiar name was Miquon—which is the name of the little settlement in Montgomery county where W. C. Hamilton & Sons has its being. At present the mill is situated in Miquon, Montgomery County, conveniently located on the Schuylkill River between two railroads, the Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia and Reading. The most modern machinery and equipment has long since replaced the simple, crude and inefficient tools of the first mill. But that modern machinery has not replaced the care and skill and craftsmanship which went into the first hand-made paper in that little mill on Paper Mill Run in 1690. Expert paper makers, many of whom are descendants of some of the pioneers of the industry, still continue to manufacture paper in the mills of W. C. Hamilton & Sons—and to make of its production for nation-wide use a fine art.



## THOMAS SHAW

Thomas Shaw is an outstanding figure not only in local but in Pennsylvania and national history. It is his name which has been given to one of our streets and public schools as well as to the railroad station and the pumping station which stands near the place where he lived. In popular usage the entire residential section known as "Upper Roxborough" is frequently called "Shawmont." It is fitting, therefore, that this supplementary sketch should include some account of the one who was long a resident of this community and who won for himself the name, "The Edison of Pennsylvania."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Shaw was born on May 5, 1838 in Philadelphia, where his first American ancestor had settled in 1694. He was the son of James Shaw, a merchant, and of Catherine Snyder Shaw, a remarkably gifted woman. There were English, French and German strains in the family. Mr. Shaw's great-great-great grandfather, James Shaw, and his eight sons fought in the Revolutionary War, as did also his great-great-great grandfather, John Peter Michelet, and his great-great grandfather, Andrew Snyder. On his mother's side Mr. Shaw traced his descent from the Michelet family which dates back to a certain Michelet, treasurer to the King of the Franks, A. D. 536. Other descendants of this renowned family were Carl Ludwig Michelet (1801-1893), the distinguished German philosopher, who was the author of excellent works in his field in both French and German, and Jules de Michelet (1798-1874), the brilliant French historian, who wrote a great history of the French Revolution in seven volumes and a history of France in fourteen volumes.

While Thomas was still a boy, his father lost everything he owned in a coal-mining venture and the son had to leave school. This proved to be fortunate for the lad, who had disliked school intensely and for whose genius the school system of those days had little room.

The books which he had refused to study while under his teachers he now read avidly by himself, often until midnight. His interest ran to higher mathematics, the problems of which he tried to solve in his own way, not unlike David Rittenhouse a hundred years before. The changes in methods of public school instruction which have come about in the last ninety years, and which now permit greater attention to be given to the individuality of the child, are due in part to the opposition and criticism towards older methods of men like Shaw, who experienced the faults of the school system of their day and who grew up to advocate these changes.

As early as eight years of age Shaw displayed his mechanical genius, beginning with the building of models. At ten he was helped by his mother, who had a similar inventive turn of mind, and the two of them worked together on a retort for melting old glass bottles. At twelve years of age he invented and constructed his first complete machine, which was to hold and unwind hanks of wool. When he got it in working order he no longer needed to hold the yarn for his mother and had more time for his own boyish activities. He would say in later years that the supreme moment of his life had been the time when he peeped in at the window and saw his mother contentedly seated before the machine as it reeled off yarn with perfect regularity. When he was fifteen he wrote an article on bridge construction which was published in a periodical of that time (1853).

During these years he had found employment in local stores but at sixteen he apprenticed himself to a machinist. Eight days before he turned twenty (April 27, 1858), he received his first patent, on a gas meter. The invention had been actually made when he was only seventeen but lack of funds and inexperience had held him back from getting his patent earlier. In 1859 he obtained patents on a press mold for glass, a gas stove, and a sewing machine. This was the beginning of a remarkable succession of patents which reached a total of one hun-

<sup>1</sup> This name deserves to be perpetuated. It is mentioned in a letter of Mrs. Wilson to Mr. William B. Forney, Jr., under date of April 3, 1940.

dred eleven by 1891 and one hundred eighty-six before he died in 1901.

When the Butcher Steel Works were founded in 1867 Shaw became the first superintendent. At the same time he was made superintendent of the Cyclops Machine Works. The Butcher Works were reorganized in 1871 as the Midvale Steel Works. By his inventive genius and skill he introduced many innovations in this plant. Before 1870 he invented the bolster and semi-elliptic spring on railroad cars and the steam power hammer. One of his simplest and yet greatest inventions was the spring-lock nut washer to hold rails in place. This was put to almost universal use on the railroads of the world in a surprisingly short time. From 1860 on he had a business of his own, made up entirely of his inventions, and after 1871 he gave all his time to these, establishing his own manufacturing plant. Out of the great number of his devices we should make special mention of the following: the United States standard mercury pressure gauges, the hydraulic pumps, the mufflers for locomotive and steamship exhausts, the safety lamp for miners, and most valuable of all as a safety device, his apparatus known as the "Shaw gas tester" for recording and testing mine gases with utmost accuracy in order to determine the points at which ignition will take place. The gas tester was officially adopted by the states of Pennsylvania and Ohio and by Germany and Russia. The patents for this epoch-making invention were issued in the years 1886-1890. It would be impossible to estimate the number of lives that have been saved in the past fifty years by the gas tester, to which should be added the lives that might have been lost in railroad accidents since 1868 without the lock nut washer.

Among the unique inventions of Thomas Shaw, one of the most novel and ingenious as well as useful was his gunpowder pile-driver. This proved to be the first successful harnessing of gunpowder for peaceful engineering purposes. It was patented shortly after the Civil War (1868 to 1870). By its aid a pile forty feet in length and fourteen inches in diameter

was forced its entire length into the ground in one minute, without any injury to the timber. Most of the pile-driving at the United States Naval Station at League Island was done by means of Shaw's invention. The Franklin Institute of Philadelphia awarded him the Scott Legacy Medal for the pile-driver.

During his last years, Mr. Shaw worked hard to convince the government that new laws were needed to protect and encourage inventors who, like himself, often spent all their resources in bringing out their inventions and then had insufficient time to reimburse themselves after the inventions had become a paying proposition. Failing in these efforts his disappointment brought on ill health and hastened his end. After spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in putting forth his inventions and after helping many a struggling mechanic in whom he recognized genius toward training, education and success, he died a poor man. The city of Philadelphia honored him, however, in other than material ways by naming after him a street, a school building, and a suburb.

Thomas Shaw married Matilda Miller Garber, a descendant of Benedict Garber, one of the earliest settlers of Collegeville. Of their three daughters, Mrs. Joseph R. (Cora I. Shaw) Wilson, now of Moorestown, New Jersey, is still living as we write this history and has supplied materials for which the present writer is very grateful. Photographs taken by her in her girlhood (1880 and after) of the newly laid Pennsylvania Railroad tracks and the Schuylkill River, and of the ice houses, the pulp works, the locks and canal boats, and of the start and finish of a Penn-Cornell boat race in the 1880's above Flat Rock Dam are all of historical value after the changes of half a century. These pictures have been loaned for exhibition at the 1940 Celebration.

Mr. Shaw said of this daughter that she was his son, as all his boys were girls. She was specially trained by her father and intrusted with confidential work relating to his inventions. From her we know something also of her father's habits of work. When inventing, it was his





Reproduction of Paper Wrapper from Copper Plate Used a Century and a Half Ago.  
Property of Harry S. Funk, Descendant of William Rittenhouse.







custom to lock himself in his laboratory at his home in Shawmont and sit motionless, perhaps for hours. The instant that the problem was solved, he rapidly sketched out his plan of invention, rarely, if ever, making any mechanical changes afterward. Mrs. Wilson recalls with sorrow the day when her father confessed to her in a trembling voice and with tears running down his cheeks that his strength had left him forever, and that he never again expected to create a new work.

Proud of his American birth and heritage, he he consistently refused to accept offers of government positions abroad. France, under Napoleon III, made a bid for his engineering services. Later, Russia did the same. He was offered the position of Minister of Railways under the Russian Government, if he would leave America and become a Russian citizen. His skill was similarly sought after by Japan, England and Sweden.

He died suddenly at Hammonton, New Jersey, January 19, 1901.



Built in 1812 the Yellow School House on Shawmont Avenue is the oldest existing schoolhouse in Philadelphia

stood inside, which the older boys would boldly mount and "ride."<sup>2</sup> A joke was coined and passed from one to another about this animal. It was said, "When the deer hears the whistles blow at noon, he will come down off his pedestal and romp about the yard." This was spoken as literal truth. The deer never moved because he never heard. But if such a miracle had occurred, either once or often, it would not have been half so wonderful as the creative agility of the master mind of the man who had lived in the house and who had wrought so patiently through the years for the good of mankind. As

for the mill whistles, it would have been fitting enough if the iron deer had jumped for joy when he heard them. For there is scarcely a shop, a steamboat, or a railroad in the world that does not in some capacity or other use one of Thomas Shaw's

improvements or inventions.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> I have this from Mr. Harry D. Evans of Shawmont, who was one of those boys.

<sup>3</sup> A good brief account of the life and work of Thomas Shaw will be found in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, Volume XVII (1935). A longer account, based on the testimony of Mrs. Wilson, is printed in Jordan's *Encyclopedia of Pennsylvania Biography*, Volume I (1914), pages 17-23, with a portrait.



## THOMAS SHAW AND THE COMMUNITY

An interesting local tradition survives in Shawmont regarding the old mansion and estate of Thomas Shaw. In the early years of the present century, sometime after Mr. Shaw's death, the house stood empty and neglected, with the shrubbery overgrown and lending to the grounds an air of seclusion and mystery. Small boys would linger about the place and peer through the arched entrance. An iron deer

The previously published accounts of Thomas Shaw, on which we have drawn in the outline given above, supply no information as to his connections with the community in which he lived. Mr. Miles, on page twenty-seven of this book, has mentioned his name in connection with the plans for the Incline Plane Railway in 1873. The fact is that he was vitally interested in this

community, as will be seen from the following statements sent to us by his daughter, Mrs. Wilson, in a letter under date of April 25, 1940: "My father loved the hills and valleys which framed the Schuylkill River and the Wis-sahickon Creek, and he was always deeply interested in the development of the community and the well-being of his neighbors. He gave frequent lectures in the Roxborough Lyceum and in Temperance Hall and also in many of the churches on scientific subjects, many of them illustrated by his old-time magic lantern, which threw pictures on a screen.

She adds this interesting anecdote: "About the time when Thomas Edison was inventing his talking-machine my father built a talking-machine, which he called his 'toy,' and which he said he had no intention of patenting. I remember that he gave a lecture on it in Manayunk—as far as I can remember, in Temperance Hall. Mr. Milligan was then editor of 'The Chronicle,' a Manayunk paper, and he was the

first to speak into the mouthpiece. On the cylinder was a roll of tinfoil which registered the vibrations of his voice. He spoke of a concert which was to be given, and the cost of the tickets was fifty cents each. The audience waited breathlessly for the instrument to speak and there was a tense silence as I wondered, with others, if it would work. *It did*, only the young man operating the machine did not turn the cylinder back sufficiently far to get the whole of Mr. Milligan's speech. Loudly, however, we all heard the words, 'Tickets, fifty cents!' The audience jumped to its feet, very much excited, and father was obliged to calm the people. On all sides one heard the exclamation: 'Why, it sounds just like Mr. Milligan's voice!' I am regretful that I cannot give you the exact date of this exhibition of a talking machine, but an account of the occurrence can certainly be found in back files of 'The Chronicle.' " Mrs. Wilson also informs us that her father was active from the beginning in sponsoring and supporting St. Timothy's Hospital.



# THE SCHUYLKILL RIVER AS IT WAS

By CORA I. SHAW WILSON

In the pre-colonial days when the sun, moon and stars were preaching their eternal sermons to the Red Man, all living creatures, in what was predestined to become Penn's Settlement, rejoiced in the crystal-clear waters of the Schuylkill River. Its deep-set valley indented the mountains and foothills from its source to its labrynthed delta. Crystal-clear the river flowed for about one hundred and fifty miles.

The Indian, because of his full possession of this pure water-course, loved its never-ceasing song of running waters; treasured the leafy and moss-covered banks; found their God intemples roofed by the branching tops of giant trees. Only Nature, lashing an occasional hurricane at the Schuylkill forested hills, dared play its destructive force against the river's sylvan glories, sacred as the playground of the aborigines.

Countless creeks, both great and small, emptied their spring-waters where the Schuylkill waters flowed, ever downward to the mighty Delaware. Leni-Lenape Indians with other friendly tribes regarded the Schuylkill Valley as a paradise on earth. THEN CAME THE PIONEER strong-spirited, and masterful, with the white man's ways of making newly discovered territory his own. The Schuylkill River and Valley were to become pulsating arteries making jobs for the settler. Cargoes of inestimable value were to be rafted to rapidly growing markets in Philadelphia, from almost anywhere along the river's course; and the white man was using his genius to secure and hold "the right of way" for his exclusive use. Like a mystical tide which ever roll in and never flows out, all kinds of sttlers came; among them many honest, sturdy trail-blazers, skilful, old-world people, eager to maintain the rights of all, as they founded new homes and planned for freedom of worship; true colonists, these. Step by step with these, there advanced the ignorant, crafty, and criminal groups; land-grabbers, ruthless and cruel, profaning every

trade which their clutching hands fingered. Constant axe-peeling and logging of the forested foot-hills soon let loose the ravaging gods of erosion, and raging flood-waters roared down the Schuylkill Valley to Delaware's tidal stream. This was the beginning which was to turn the river's crystal-clear water into a channel for rubbish, sewage and silt, from which it could not free itself, nor prevent the pollution of the mighty Delaware. "Noisy Waters" and "Brawling Waters" which the Indians named the Schuylkill in its clean-water days, was rapidly degenerating into dirty waters. Little did this matter to the pioneer river-navigator, for heavy loads could be transported only when the river was roaring with flood waters.

Polling their cargo-laden crafts became a science with the half-savage rivermen, for constant danger lurked ahead from submerged rocks, cascades, fish-dams projecting from shores to near mid-stream.

Down-stream the river-floods raged, and the going was swift for all river-craft bound for Philadelphia wharves, or the port at Chester.

These river sailors were all merchants in the raw, ever eager to line their pockets with good money, for they early learned the values of forest-findings, farm produce, mine out-put and mill products. The inland, water-way comerce of a flooded Schuylkill was filling the hungry maw of shipping docked at the "City of Brotherly Love," or even lashed to a giant tree up Bristol or Burlington way on the Delaware. The Schuylkill River with its rich Valley was rapidly being put to work, making jobs for men, laying the foundation for Philadelphia's great industrial future, and the glories of Pennsylvania's farm lands. Almost immediately after the actual settlement of Penn's Province, the settlers became commercially-minded, and Penn's section of the new world became known as "the Granary of America";

it was regarded also as the main center of educational enterprise. Burke reported to high authorities in England that Penn's colonists were buying Blackstone's works on Law, and young men could be seen in the streets of Philadelphia, carrying a volume of Blackstone under their arms as they trudged to and from their daily labors.

The tidal waters of the Schuylkill, as well as the upper fresh waters, teemed with fish and the fishing industry became a major one, especially at the "Falls of the Schuylkill," where deep pot-holes in a massive natural dam were filled with salt-water fish of large size, as well as the fresh-water smaller fry. Here they could be seen swimming about together. The catch was netted so easily that crowds of fishermen from the white settlements soon drove the Indian wholly from this treasured food-paradise. With the construction of the Fairmount Dam in 1840, these pot-holes were forever submerged and the Schuylkill fishing industry began to wane. Prior to the building of Flat Rock Dam at Flat Rock (above Manayunk) the cargo-shippers were demanding safer and quicker means of transportation for river commerce. Too many valuable cargoes were swamped or lost altogether en route from Reading to Philadelphia. Also, the Red Man was growing hostile to all who had deprived them of their privileges as the original owners of the Schuylkill and its rich valley. Tame looking canal-boats as well as the earlier long-boats and flat-boats became armed outposts, and armed pilots pot-shot at any menacing brave who even so much as waved a bow at them. The killing of pilots and braves did not become a Schuylkill industry but it came close to it. Even as late as 1827 rivermen declared that "a dead Indian was to be preferred at any time to a live one." The Quakers greatly deplored this state of affairs and made every effort to maintain friendly relations with the afflicted savages. They were welcomed in all Meeting Houses.

The Haverford, Merion, Ardmore Meeting was such a refuge, and when Schuylkill waters

were placid, it was not unusual for an Indian to ferry worshippers across the river, competing with the regular white ferryman. The Schuylkill banks were then forested thickly, and back in the woods wild animals, reptiles, and savages could always bring fear and danger close to the sturdy Friends worshipping at the Merion Meeting House, the first building of which was erected in 1690. Many an Indian guide helped to keep "First Day" orderliness for the timid, as worshippers made their way from the east shore of the Schuylkill to the west, and wended their way over Indian trails, to where God could be worshipped in peace by the faithful. Ferrying across the river was not such a dangerous undertaking after the building of Flat Rock and Fairmount dams, for then tidal waters rose no higher than the dam breast at Fairmount.

Pleasure seekers and sports lovers ever have sought the joys which a stream like the Schuylkill can give, and the well-to-do in colonial times built mansions near its shore lines where in summer seasons they could live far from the humid heat in the "Quaker City."

No small river (and the Schuylkill is a small river in comparison with the great Delaware's tidal currents) has ever played a more constructive part in fostering the beginnings of Philadelphia, one of the greatest industrial cities of the world. The rich agricultural counties of Pennsylvania which lie near its stream up state became known in the beginning because of the large cargoes of grain and other farm produce which reached markets by the Schuylkill barges and later its canal system; lastly to be followed by railroads hugging its banks miles on end. Commercially today it is an idling stream, mostly known by pleasure seekers. Even as a source for pure drinking water for Philadelphia consumers it has wasted to a shadow of its former self, although but few rivers can boast of a water-source supply equal to the deep-hill springs, pure and crystal-clear, which feed its numerous tributaries.

Lovers of the Schuylkill should make many efforts to arouse authorities to the point where the active conduct of river commerce can be



profitably resumed, without running afoul of shifting mud banks.

Of romantic adventuring there was plenty by old folks and young, as they rode in gay cavalcades for safety and community-buying in Philadelphia. Of these, old letters in attics could well attest, if some of the dust were brushed aside. Tales have been handed down in the author's family of the days when her maternal great-grandmother and grandmother

rode in groups with their neighbors along the Indian trails which followed the banks of the Schuylkill River. Gay parties, these, and slung across the saddle were saddle-bags to hold the dainty whimsies, purchased by the frivolous, and the solid homespuns for hard wear. Beautiful was the trail, and many a love-troth was plighted up Schuylkill way in leafy shrines.

<sup>5</sup> Credit for historical facts and dates in this article is given by its author to *Our First Hundred Years*, by C. Edwards Lester, United States Publishing Co., 1876, and to Scharf and Westcott's *History of Philadelphia*, L. H. Evert and Co., 1884.





CIVIC, FRATERNAL, BUSINESS AND CULTURAL  
ORGANIZATIONS OF ROXBOROUGH,  
MANAYUNK AND WISSAHICKON



AND A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Edited by* THE REV. WILLIAM H. COOPER



The last twenty or twenty-five years have seen many changes and developments in the community which cannot easily be described in a systematic way. One way of viewing them, however, is to look at local organizations and activities and to attempt to measure their recent history and progress. The following facts have been supplied to the editor of this section by responsible persons connected in every case with the groups concerned.







*Roxborough High School*





## CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

### THE SCHUYLKILL WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION

OF THE TWENTY-FIRST WARD

(Organized 1917)

The Schuylkill Women's Christian Temperance Union of the Twenty-first Ward was organized May 23, 1917, in the Wissahickon Methodist Church, by the Philadelphia County Organizer, Mrs. F. A. Janney, under the leadership of the County President, Mrs. M. V. Stringer. The initial membership consisted of twenty-one ladies, and the following were the first officers:

*President*.....Miss Uretta Johnson  
*Secretary*.....Miss Blanche L. Heidinger  
*Treasurer*.....Mrs. James K. Helms

The Organization has continued to function steadily for the past twenty-three years, with a present membership of thirty-four women. The society meets the third Tuesday of every month, from October to June.

The Present officers are:

*President*.....Mrs. Wm. B. Forney  
*Vice-Pres.*.....Mrs. John Woodruff  
*Secretary*.....Miss Blanche L. Heidinger  
*Treasurer*.....Mrs. Lillian Lane



### THE ROXBOROUGH-MANAYUNK LIONS' CLUB

(Organized 1930)

The history of the Roxborough-Manayunk Lions Club dated back to 1930 when Hugo F. Blei conceived the idea that such a civic service organization should be formed in this community as a part of the International Association of Lions Clubs.

The Lions Club is a non-political and non-

sectarian civic organization composed of representative business and professional men interested in their community with a purpose of more than good fellowship and club social life, important as these are, but with the ability to recognize community needs, to discover the means of meeting these needs and either by independent effort or through cooperation with other agencies effect a remedy. Following down ten years of the club's existence we recognize the club presidents during that period.

*Pres.*—Hugo F. Blei.....1930 - 1931

*Pres.*—Clarence F. Henry....1931 - 1932

*Pres.*—Charles S. Allen.....1932 - 1933

*Pres.*—Erwin G. Stein.....1933 - 1934

*Pres.*—F. Earl Westcott.....1934 - 1935

*Pres.*—Richard B. Bodkin....1935 - 1936

*Pres.*—J. M. Chesnutt.....1936 - 1937

*Pres.*—J. Elwood Barrett....1937 - 1938

*Pres.*—Harry S. Williams....1938 - 1939

*Pres.*—Dr. Maxwell F. White.1939 - 1940

Listed among many outstanding civic works of the club may be found: the supplying of over 300 pairs of eye glasses for school children, providing white canes for the blind in our community, contribution to milk fund of our schools, annual picnic for children of Northern Home, annual contribution to North Light Boys Club, Red Cross, Salvation Army, United Campaign, and annual presentation of Loins Club award to outstanding citizen in community.



### THE ROXBOROUGH GARDEN CLUB

(Organized 1936)

The Roxborough Garden Club came into existence in May 1936, when a small group of garden lovers met one evening to talk over plans for organizing a club where persons interested in raising flowers could discuss their

problems with one another and receive helpful suggestions for increasing the beauty of their home grounds. Officers elected at that first meeting were Mrs. Walter C. Dietrich, President; Mrs. Mortimer Blair, Vice-President; Mr. George G. Littlewood, Treasurer; Miss Helen F. W. Jones, Secretary; Mr. J. Stafford Mattis, Chairman of the Program Committee; Mrs. Howard K. White, Chairman of the Membership Committee.

The following September, the club held its first formal meeting at the Kendrick Recreation Center and announced as its objectives—to exchange ideas on gardening, to discuss methods of controlling insects and pests, to hear lectures on horticultural subjects, to have garden visiting days, and to hold flower shows. All of these aims have been faithfully adhered to, the membership has grown from 17 to 150, and no doubt a new interest in gardening has been aroused in the community. At its eight meetings a year there has been presented a wide variety of subjects, with outstanding guest speakers, talks by members and informal flower shows.

Since its inception, the club has undertaken the planting of the grounds of the Memorial Hospital, and through the addition of evergreens, dogwood, flowering shrubs, and perennials has added greatly to the beauty of the grounds, and has helped to bring cheer to convalescent patients who are able to be out of doors. The club helped in an advisory capacity in the planting of tulip bulbs at the Joel Cook School, and hopes through this medium to arouse a further interest in gardening among the children.

The climax of each year's program has been the Annual Spring flower Show, attracting every year more than 250 exhibits, and over a thousand spectators. These shows have always been a community event, with all classes open to the public, and special exhibits arranged by school children. They have received generous praise from professionals and commercial growers and have ranked high among amateur flower shows in this section of the country.

In all of its activities it has been fortunate in having the help and guidance of Mr. J. Stafford Mattis, and it is through his assistance and cooperation that many of its efforts have been successfully carried out.

The officers for the 1939-40 season were:

*President* . . . . . Mrs. Harry G. Rieger  
*Vice-President* . . . . . Mrs. Arthur Forster  
*Treasurer* . . . . . Mr. James D. Schofield  
*Rec. Secretary* . . . Miss Myrtle Katzenbach  
*Cor. Secretary* . . . Miss Mildred Goshow



## THE WISSAHICKON CIVIC IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION (Organized 1937)

In the month of May, 1937, several people living in Wissahickon conceived the idea of organizing a Civic Association, for the purpose of improving civic conditions and by assembling together to promote sociability and good-fellowship. Notwithstanding the discouragement usual to any new undertaking, and firm in their resolution to overcome all opposition, they finally managed to call together 35 public-spirited citizens in the Social Hall of the Wissahickon Presbyterian Church to discuss the matter they had in mind.

Mr. Herbert Bunn, a local business man, who presided, outlined plans to the group assembled. After a lengthy discussion, in which arguments and opinions were freely expressed, it was unanimously agreed that the Wissahickon Civic Improvement Association be organized. Mr. Bunn was elected President and under his capable leadership plans were immediately started for a definite and constructive program for the welfare of the Community.

Committees and Chairmen of Committees were appointed and the work of the Association began. The organization increased rapidly in membership and as the various projects multiplied and work piled up, other officers were



elected. — Miss Beatrice Miller, Financial Secretary; Joseph Hodgkinson, Recording and Corresponding Secretary; Harry Fox, Treasurer.

The first thing of importance the new Association centered their energies on was the demolition of the unsightly car-barn at Sumac Street and Rochelle Avenue with the thought in mind, also, of getting the site added to the Honor Roll plot which it adjoins. This dilapidated car-barn, an eyesore unused since 1927, was a hangout for tramps and a hazard for children who played there. After careful and thorough search was made by the City Authorities, who kindly took the matter up at the earnest request of the members, the Association was granted the right of possession for Memorial purposes.

Preparations on a large scale were then made for work on the plot, as well as on the Honor Roll, plans for which had been drawn by the architect, Mr. Herman Miller, and passed by the Art Jury. Considerable work had to be done, particularly in the way of grading, the removal of debris and planting of shrubbery, as it was the purpose of the Association to have a beautiful park at this location—the gateway to the 21st Ward—a suitable setting for the new Honor Roll.

With justifiable pride the members of the Association can boast that their goal did not fall short of achievement. Money for the Honor Roll was raised, approximately \$2000.00, through the generous support of friends and kind neighbors in Manayunk, Roxborough and Wissahickon, who deserve the thanks of all our people for their hearty cooperation.

While this work was in progress the Association had been corresponding with and meeting Mr. Mitchell, Traffic Engineer of the City, and others in authority, regarding lights and signs urgently needed on Ridge Avenue at busy intersections. These efforts were not in vain. One signal-light was erected on the Ridge at Manayunk Avenue and some signs placed along the busy street. It is understood that other necessary lights and signals asked for will be

put up by the Traffic Bureau in the not very distant future.

As a giant oak from a little acorn grows, so this Association, from 35 wide-awake citizens as a nucleus in 1937, has been steadily growing, month by month, until at this time there is a total membership of over 500 and it is the second largest Civic Association in the Philadelphia area. And, pardon another simile,—as the mighty monarch of the forest spreads out its sheltering and protecting leafy arms, so the Wissahickon Civic Improvement Association stretches out its arms to aid and assist the unfortunate and helpless.

Its efforts are not confined solely to projects that may perhaps give prestige, or show their civic pride. Through the untiring efforts of our Welfare Committee, Sunshine Committee and Representative to the 21st Ward Community Council, much good work is done that the outside world never hears about, many acts of kindness that alleviate distress and suffering among the lowly, making them feel their lives a little more tolerable by taking off the keenest edge of their suffering. These committees are constantly on the alert, ever ready to give a helping hand where needed.

The present Officers of the Association are:

*President*.....Walter Harmer  
*1st Vice-President*.....Harry Wacker  
*2nd Vice-President*...Arthur Mainwaring  
*Secretary*.....Joseph Hodgkinson  
*Financial Secretary*...Miss Beatrice Miller  
*Treasurer*.....Louis Cohen

Would we had sufficient space to give more details of our many activities, the roads we have had fixed up, the new fences, and the progress we are gradually but surely making. This live Association, a constantly growing group of active workers, feel confident they will accomplish many things of permanent value to the Community under the able leadership of Mr. Walter Harmer, their energetic President and his efficient corps of Officers.

Our meetings are held the third Monday evening of each month in the Northern Home.

## THE ROXBOROUGH-WISSAHICKON- MANAYUNK COMMUNITY COUNCIL (Organized 1937)

About February, 1937, a little group of people began to meet around a luncheon table in Roxborough, for the purpose of conferring at intervals of a month about their common working problems. The leader of this informal group was an experienced social worker, Miss Mildred Crawley, connected with public relief, who had sensed the need for more local contacts with others engaged in endeavors for community welfare. Out of these monthly gatherings has grown the Community Council of Roxborough, Wissahickon, and Manayunk, now fully organized and carrying out a monthly program of vital interest and wide scope.

Few existing groups of this type can compare with it for catholicity of personnel. The variety of representation found in the Council as a whole is reflected in the personnel of the present officers; the president, Miss Ethel M. Coster, is the principal of the Levering Public School; the vice-president, Miss Mildred Eisenberg, is active in the Ladies' Guild of Memorial Hospital; the secretary, Miss Elizabeth Simpson, is an officer of the Needlework Guild; the treasurer, Miss Madeline Collins, is a home and school visitor. Among the fifty or more persons who are regular attendants at the luncheon meetings are clergymen of several local churches and their wives; workers connected with the Blind and Old Age Pensions, Relief, and Mother's Assistance; attendance officers, nurses of both public and parochial schools, principals and counselors of public schools; physicians, representatives of the Memorial Hospital, of the Lions' Club of private social agencies such as the Family Society, the Society to Protect Children from Cruelty, the Sheltering Arms, and the Visiting Nurse Society; and individuals whose interest is that of public-spirited residents of the community.

Speakers include both those invited from the outside and members of the group. Current problems in every phase of community welfare and the workings of the various government

departments and agencies are explained and discussed. Individuals find opportunities here for extremely helpful interchange of information and ideas, as well as for personal conference about specific aspects of their common tasks. Recently the Council adopted a brief constitution and inaugurated annual dues to cover a modest budget.

During the year 1939 - 1940 the Community Council has made a study of community housing and of the local unemployment situation. A fund has been raised to provide a playground at Shurs Lane and Cresson Street which is to be opened this summer. Attention is being given also to the care of children of pre-school age in certain congested areas and a nursery school is being projected. Thus the Community Council stands for a constant and growing interest in the social welfare and progress of Roxborough, Wissahickon and Manayunk.



## THE WOMEN'S CLUB OF ROXBOROUGH (Organized 1929)

This is one of the most active organizations of its kind in Philadelphia. It was founded by a small group of women of the Kendrick Recreation Center, Dec. 5, 1929. The club has grown in size to an active membership of fifty women who take an active part in civic affairs and the welfare of their community and city. The first executive body was: Mrs. Edith Woods, President; Mrs. Agnes Rigler, Secretary; Mrs. Mary Sykes, Treasurer. Their objective was sociability; they were also taught handicrafts by Mrs. Von Gross. After three meetings, which were held at the Kendrick Center, their course of activities was changed to the more serious work of welfare in this community. This philanthropic work continued locally until March 1936, when they became affiliated with the Federation of Women's Clubs.

Shortly after this their meeting place was changed from Kendrick Center to the Rox-



borough Memorial Hospital, which had become their primary objective in charitable work. It was there that "The White Gift Service" was established by these women. Each member brings a gift, suitable for use in hospital work, wrapped in white paper; these gifts are then presented to the Memorial Hospital followed by a tableaux of "Christ The King" constituting a feeling of good will toward all.

An annual event is their Christmas Party at which baskets are packed and distributed to the needy. March 16th, 1939, The Women's Club celebrated its tenth anniversary with a banquet at the Belfield Tea Room. The guest of honor was Mrs. Agnes Rigler who had served as secretary for the ten year period; the guest speaker was Mrs. J. Bertram Hervey, a most active woman in Women's Organizations and then President of The Federation. The club furnished

and maintained a room in The Nurses Home of the Memorial Hospital; they assist The Ladies' Aid of the Hospital with their annual lawn fete, by conducting the Kiddies Korner; contribute to such charitable organizations as: The United Campaign, The American Red Cross, The Salvation Army, The Cancer Research, The Institute for The Blind and other smaller organizations throughout the city. The present executive committee is: Mrs. Agnes Rigler, President; Mrs. Sally Yates, Vice-President; Mrs. Elsie Campbell, Secretary; Mrs. Mary Sykes, Treasurer; Mrs. Sara Winner, Nurse's Room Committee; Mrs. Ed. Smith, Sick Committee; Mrs. Wm. F. Cox, Publicity.

The Women's Club of Roxborough is ever ready to aid the needy who are brought to their attention and to lend assistance with any welfare work which tends to better conditions of this, their beloved community.

## FRATERNAL, VETERANS AND PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATIONS

ROXBOROUGH LODGE, No. 135  
FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS  
(Organized 1813)

This organization, with an effective membership of approximately 750 men, was headed in 1940 by the following elected officers:

*Worshipful Master* . . . Charles H. Garner  
*Senior Warden* . . . Edgar J. Smith  
*Junior Warden* . . . Allen J. Lebengood  
*Treasurer* . . . Girvin M. Priest  
*Secretary* . . . Willis B. Heidinger  
*Trustees*

Lazelle Thornton, Thomas F. Boon,  
Harry E. Fox, Willis B. Heidinger  
*Representative in Grand Lodge*  
Harry D. Evans

In 1913 a centennial history was published in a handsomely bound and printed volume, entitled *Freemasonry in Roxborough*, compiled from authenticated records by Horace H. Platt, historian, and William Lawton, editor. Following is the list of Past Masters of this Lodge since 1913:

1914—Howard A. Lukens.  
1915—Arthur M. Sheble.  
1916—Johnson Hughes (deceased).  
1917—George W. Edmunds (deceased).  
1918—Harry W. Farrand.  
1919—Harry G. Hagerty.  
1920—Clarence L. Craven.  
1921—Ross B. Linton.  
1922—Harry Walker.  
1923—Adam Wilkinson.  
1924—Edward O. Parkinson.  
1925—George F. Faustman, Jr. (deceased).  
1926—William T. Feiring (deceased).  
1927—Charles W. Preston.  
1928—Charles E. Ehly.  
1929—John G. Dennis.  
1930—Harry P. Ottinger.  
1931—Frank J. Reinert, Jr.  
1932—Walter T. Lord.  
1933—Harry D. Evans.

1934—Thomas F. Boon.  
1935—John A. Hague, Jr.  
1936—F. Earl Westcott.  
1937—Charles Elmer Frey.  
1938—Joseph Missimer.  
1939—Arthur H. Jacobs.

The following statistics represent the growth of the Lodge through its history:

1813 . . . . . 23 members  
1840 . . . . . 43 members  
1865 . . . . . 188 members  
1890 . . . . . 199 members  
1915 . . . . . 450 members (approximately)  
1940 . . . . . 750 members (approximately)

The place of meeting since 1861 has been Masonic Hall, Main and Cotton Streets.



MANAIUNG TRIBE No. 118  
IMPROVED ORDER OF RED MEN, INC.  
(Organized 1870)

The following are the officers of this organization:

*Sachem (President)* . . . Henry Schumacher  
*Chief of Records (Secretary)*  
Frank H. Schuhard  
*Collector of Wampum (Financial Sec.)*  
Thomas Baker  
*Keeper of Wampum (Treasurer)*  
Henry Stemmler, Jr.

There are 1075 members in the Tribe, of whom 90 per cent are local residents and 10 per cent live in various sections of the country and as far west as California.

During the years of the World War there were 800 members, of whom 100 entered the service of the country and five gave their lives.

The Manaiung Tribe bears the name of Manayunk in its original Indian form. Its home at Green Lane and Smick Street is owned free of debt. The Tribe has never failed to pay its sick and death benefits within a period of two weeks.



COURT MANAYUNK No. 52, INC.  
FORESTERS OF AMERICA  
(Organized 1875)

In the work of humanity, our Order is foremost and we honor its imperishable principles. This year is important to us because it marks the Fiftieth Anniversary as Foresters of America, and the Anniversary of our two communities. We are thankful to our Supreme Being that we have lived long enough to see and take part in this memorable celebration.

On July 5th, 1890, Court Manayunk No. 52, Inc., formally declared its independence and seceded from the High Court of England, Ancient Order of Foresters. Tradition tells us that our Order was originally instituted in England and was in existence when the Crusaders crowded upon Palestine, and when the wandering minstrels sang of Robin Hood and his merry men. The exact date will remain in obscurity but its origin dates from the Norman Conquest of England in the year 1066.

The authentic history begins with the institution of Court Leeds No. 1 in England 1790, the records of which are still in existence.

It was a serious thing to become a Forester at that time because the "Sedition Meeting Act" provided severe penalties for private meeting. Thus the early Foresters were restricted almost to discouragement, and it is a wonder that the Order survived the vigorous hand of the authorities.

The history of Forestry in the United States in the Colonial Period begins with the establishment of a court in Philadelphia in the year 1832. A second court was opened in Brooklyn in 1841. In 1843, Forestry was started in New York City and in Boston in 1847. In the year of 1875 Court Manayunk was organized.

Until December 29, 1874, the Order was under the jurisdiction of the High Court of England on which date the United States Subsidiary High Court was organized in Brooklyn, N. Y. There were at this time in this country forty-three Courts and two thousand three hundred members.

The 53rd convention of the High Court of

England held in Glasgow, Scotland, which opened August 1st, 1887 provided the cause which separated the Foresters of United States from the Ancient Order of Foresters of England. The above convention enacted a law that no subsidiary High Court could incorporate a general law or rule which would prevent the admittance of any man to membership on account of his color, creed, or nationality. The United States Subsidiary Court had incorporated the word "Whites" as a qualification for membership in United States. The Chicago Convention in 1887 filed a protest to England, and in 1888, Reading Executive Council of the High Court of England issued an answer to the Chicago Declaration directing the Subsidiary High Court of the United States to expunge the word "White" from its code of laws. The England High Court did not have to wait long for an answer. The United States Subsidiary held its Convention in Minneapolis, August 15th, 1889, where the Foresters Declaration of Independence was adopted and the Foresters of America were given life as a pure American Fraternal Institution. You will observe the history of this Order is like the history of our country. It was established as were the Colonies; it grew and prospered as they did.

In 1890, Court Manayunk No. 52 had a membership of 100 and remained so until 1898, when it lost fifteen members. From this period under the able leadership of Charles E. Buckley, a taxidermist, who lived and conducted his business at 4363 Cresson Street, the Order prospered in rapid strides. After his retirement, Dr. Joseph F. Schlotterer became the Court's next brilliant leader, and also the Court's Physician.

The Court in 1914 reached its highest peak with 1286 members. The call to arms for the World War was the first major setback to the Court, which sent 168 of its members across the sea. The Honor Roll of the overseas' veterans can be seen at the Forester's Hall. The next blow came in 1921 when the flu epidemic paid a visit to our city and took twenty members and nine wives, but the Court was due for a greater setback, and it came in the form of a depression.

Because of lack of employment, the Court lost 350 more members. It not only lost in membership but financially as well, losing about \$50,000.

What Fraternity could survive this catastrophe? The Court was fortunate to have a number of loyal men. Led by Wm. A. Hooker, these men made real sacrifices, caring for neither time, sleep or money. In order that the Court shall live and carry on, there have been added some new social features which are proving successful. Up to December 12th, 1939, the Court has paid all of its debts and claims.

The Court is moving rapidly forward again, it is constantly increasing in strength and wherever you go in the United States you will find a Forester. Nearly a thousand years have passed since the Foresters banded themselves together in Sherwood Forest to defend their liberties and to resist the invader. The virtues of their manhood have withstood the assaults of time and stand forth today radiant and immortal, and you will find in this community a band of Foresters, who by practicing the principles of their Order and weekly pledging their allegiance to the flag of the United States, have supplied to the community in which they live better citizens, nobler fathers, and have made happier families.

Approved by The Grand Court of the F. of A. of the State of Pennsylvania.

JOSEPH J. KELLY, *Grand Sec.*

ISIDORE A. SMITH, *P. C. R.*



ROXBOROUGH ASSEMBLY No. 78  
ARTISANS ORDER OF MUTUAL  
PROTECTION

(Organized 1924)

The Artisans Order of Mutual Protection was originally organized in Washington, D. C., on May 1, 1873, with 21 members. The membership is now approximately 28,000. The Order operates under the insurance laws of the vari-

ous states where it does business, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, New York, District of Columbia, and California.

The Order pays both sick and death benefits. There is a Junior Department, organized in September, 1933. Boys between the ages of 30 days and 18 years are admitted to this department, which now has approximately 4000 members.

Roxborough Assembly No. 78 was instituted May 2, 1924 with 89 members. This Assembly meets on the second Monday of each month in I. O. O. F. Hall, Ridge Avenue and Lyceum Street. Since its institution \$20,000 has been paid to beneficiaries of deceased members of Roxborough Assembly and \$1845 has been paid to members of the Assembly in sick benefits. There are 84 Assemblies in the Order, which is a member of the National Fraternal Congress of America.



THE AMERICAN LEGION

(Organized 1919)

At the close of the World War in 1918 many men and women who served their country were anxious to form an organization to perpetuate the memories of the great conflict. From this human urge the American Legion was born in Paris, France.

A Post of the American Legion was organized in the Twenty-first Ward in the early part of 1919, meeting at St. John's Parish Hall, which was loaned to them without charge by the late Monsignor Eugene Murphy. This post of the Legion took the name of Thomas F. Emery and was given the number 229 by the Department of Pennsylvania and became known as the Thomas F. Emery Post 229, American Legion.

The Emery Post continued for more than 14 years and did civic and patriotic duty to the community in many charitable and civic causes. One of its great civic functions was to open and maintain for a time a soup kitchen that fed



the many hungry people of the community who were victims of the depression. Unfortunately, however, Emery Post fell victim of the depression and was forced to disband, due to the heavy mortgage held by the State Department of Banking, and in August, 1935 all that Emery Post possessed was under the hammer of the Sheriff of Philadelphia County.

A brighter day dawned, however, for the unorganized veterans of the Twenty-first Ward. Since there was no American Legion Post in the community to serve the ex-service men, the patriotic fervor of more than 1800 veterans who served from this community in 1917 and 1918 led the Department of Pennsylvania to take action. In the early days of 1936, Adam Gosinski of Argonne Post, Commander of the Seventh District, delegated Francis J. Whitehead to found and organize a new American Legion in the Twenty-first Ward. Comrade Whitehead, who had been a Past Commander in 1929 and who was profoundly interested in the affairs of the Legion, began his task immediately. On February 8, 1936, at a meeting at his home, 229 Baldwin Street, he declared a new Post was in the progress of organization. Thereafter at frequent intervals meetings were held at the homes of various members. One interesting meeting held at the home of Thomas Gill, 4010 Lauriston Street, signed the necessary application for a charter and adopted the name of the Post as Rox-Man-Wissa. The purpose of the name was to avoid any entanglements in regard to the politics or creed of any future member. The name itself was an abbreviation of Roxborough, Manayunk and Wissahickon. The ex-service men of the community responded very generously to the various calls and it was soon necessary to obtain quarters at the Kendrick Recreation Center. The membership at the close of the 1936 Legion year reached 60 men.

Meetings were continued throughout the Spring and Fall of 1936, and in October, 1936, Albert Goldbeck was the first elected Commander of Rox-Man-Wissa Post 680, American Legion. The term of Commander Goldbeck was a very successful one. The membership in-

creased nearly 100% and a real community interest was aroused in the members. One of the outstanding acts of this administration was the response to a call for help to the flood-stricken people of the Ohio Valley. During this period in less than twenty-four hours the Legion relief workers had opened stations for the receiving of supplies at the Roxy, Jeffries, Riviera and Wissahickon Theatres. Wagon loads of food-stuffs and clothing were collected and forwarded by the Legion through its county council along with generous contributions of cash. The other officers of the year 1937 were William A. Struse, Senior Vice-Commander; Joseph S. Collinson, Junior Vice-Commander; Francis J. Whitehead, Adjutant; William J. Bayer, Finance Officer; Joseph Cahill, Historian; Thomas Gill, Robert Norton, Sergeants-at-Arms; Executive Committee: Frank J. Walsh, Edward Cushworth, Dr. Mortimer Blair, Harry H. John. Delegates to county council: Harry O. Leech, David A. Fillman.

Commander Goldbeck served in the Army as Private in Co. B, 163rd Infantry, 41st Division. He enlisted in Philadelphia, Aug. 24, 1918 and was discharged Feb. 20, 1919.

With more and more interest shown in Legion affairs by the Veterans, Rox-Man-Wissa Post 680 continued to wax strong and in the fall of 1937 elected as Commander Edward L. McConnell, full of vigor and interest in the cause. The administration of 1937 and 1938 was to rank more than a successful one. The Recreation Centre that served so well was not now acceptable and Rox-Man-Wissa Post acquired quarters in the Grand Army Post Hall at Fountain and Ridge Avenues. 1938 saw a continual growth in membership and community activity. The Legion participated in nearly every civic function and was warmly received by the Business Men's and Fraternal Organizations and won for itself a place in the patriotic hearts of the townspeople. Many acts of unselfish service were done during this administration. Space is not sufficient to chronicle them. But it must be said the outstanding deed was the creation of the School Children's Shoe Fund.

Comrade Herman Eisenberg conceived the idea that too many children were compelled to miss school due to the lack of shoes. This suggestion was unanimously voted Nov. 18, 1937, and the school children's shoe fund became an active force for good, commended by the district superintendent of schools and many teachers and generous citizens. The committee that served was William Struse, Secretary; William J. Bayer, Treasurer; Francis J. Whitehead, Chairman. More than 200 pairs of shoes were distributed during the term of 1937 and 1938.

The officers who served with Commander McConnell were Albert J. Taylor, Senior Vice-Commander; John Cholerton, Junior Vice-Commander; Francis J. Whitehead, Historian; Anthony Deordio, John McKeown, Sergeants-at-Arms; Albert J. Goldbeck, P. C., Harry O. Leech, delegates to county council.

Comander McConnell served in the World War as Sergeant in the Motor Transport Corps for the Army. He enlisted at Philadelphia October 31, 1917, served in the A. E. F., and was discharged May 28, 1919.

The foundation of the newly organized Legion had been surely laid by the three part administrations and now it was destined to become vigorous and strong. The election of September 22, 1938 brought forth a sterling soldier in the person of Dr. Arthur A. Mitten as commander. During this term several great things happened, among which was acquiring a place of our own to meet. A committee appointed by Commander Mitten selected our present headquarters, a large spacious building on East Shawmont Avenue. At this time a mandate of the State Department prohibited the naming of post homes after towns and required they be named after deceased veterans. This occasioned the relinquishing the name of Rox.-Man.-Wissa. Post 680 and adopting the name Cahill-Cholerton Post 680.

Thus the new post was renamed after Raymond J. Cahill and Harry Cholerton.

Raymond J. Cahill enlisted December 24, 1917 and went to France with the Sixth Regi-

ment, 82nd Co. of Marines. He was killed in action at Belleau Woods.

Henry Cholerton served on the Mexican border and upon the United States' entry into the World War was recalled for service in March, 1917. He was seriously wounded in action at Sergy Wood as a Corporal in command of the automatic rifle squad. He died a short time later in a hospital.

The Legion continued to grow and now numbered more than 250 members. The executive qualities of Dr. Mitten proved him a leader and the organization was ready for greater things. The shoe fund was continued and the new home was opened on New Year's Day of 1939. Then a round of social activities began with a Past Comander's Banquet held at the Anchor-age Cafe, on April 10, 1939. The summer of this year brought forth the great Legion Carnival that was attended by 18,000 townspeople. This event, directed by Past Commander Edward L. McConnell and Albert J. Goldbeck, will be an annual affair and is awaited anxiously by the people of the community. Another service in keeping with the tradition of the Legion was instituted as the Legion Blood Donors' League. The purpose is to offer blood for transfusions to all who might require it. Many other things too numerous to mention were begun during this administration.

So successful in all things, Dr. Mitten was unanimously elected to succeed himself for the term 1939-40. The officers who served under this administration were Senior Vice-Commander Raymond Seewagon, Junior Vice-Commander Anthony Deordio, Finance Officer William Bayer, Adjutant Samuel LaPenta, Chaplain Rev. H. D. Wacker, Historian Francis J. Whitehead, Sergeants-at-Arms, Nicolas Rosely, James McLhattan. Delegates to the county council were Edward L. McConnell, P. C., and Thomas Gill.

Dr. Mitten served as Captain in the Medical Corps of the Army and was wounded in action September 4, 1918, and taken prisoner by the enemy.

Thus was the American Legion born and so



does it live in our midst to carry out the great principles enunciated by our founders.

"For God and country, we associate ourselves together for the following purposes: To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our association in the Great War; to inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation; to combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses; to make right the master of might; to promote peace and good will on earth; to safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy; to consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness."

FRANCIS J. WHITEHEAD, *Historian*,  
Cahill Cholerton Post No. 680,  
American Legion.



HATTAL-TAYLOR POST No. 333  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES  
(Organized 1920)

With the closing of the World War and the return to their homes of the young men who had answered their country's call and served in the Army, Navy and Marine Corps, the thought was born that they should have an organization or society amongst themselves, whereby they could perpetuate the memories and events of their service and materially assist their comrades and their dependents in the future.

On Sunday afternoon, February 29, 1920 a group of six (6) honorably discharged officers and enlisted men of the Army, Navy and Marine Corps of the United States of America gathered at the home of Mr. Hugh B. Giles, 432 Martin Street, to discuss the formation of a Post to represent the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States in this vicinity.

Various suggestions were made for a proper and dignified name to assign to this organization and everyone present was of the opinion that it should be named for one or more deceased comrades from the Twenty-first Ward, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, amongst the first to fall on the field of battle, inasmuch as the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States was founded to bind together the men who had fought and suffered on foreign soil or hostile waters; and, to perpetuate the memory of our late comrades who had fallen in battle and had made the supreme sacrifice in their country's cause.

It was finally agreed that the names of Privates Clarence Hattal and William Taylor should be presented at the next meeting to be held on February 12, 1920 for approval as the future name of the new Post. Their surnames in hyphenated form were considered a proper and fitting name for it, but it was also agreed to ask suggestions from those present at this meeting in order to ascertain whether it would be possible to use a combination of letters of all fallen comrades of this ward and from these create a suitable name by which this Post shall be named.

The name of Hattal-Taylor was agreed on and upon the receipt of the Charter from the National Headquarters of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States the designated number was given as 333, the charter dated February 9, 1920 reading:

HATTAL-TAYLOR POST No. 333  
VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS  
OF THE UNITED STATES

and the same name and number was used when the Post applied for and received on April 1, 1927 a charter from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and recorded as such on the archives of the Common Pleas Court.

With 101 members' names on the Charter, the Post was installed by the Department of Pennsylvania officials in Odd Fellows Hall, Roxborough, Philadelphia, and the next 15 meetings were held in Odd Fellows Hall, Wissahickon, Philadelphia; 24 meetings were held

in Lyceum Hall, Roxborough, Philadelphia; 19 meetings were held in the Odd Fellows Hall, Roxborough, Philadelphia; then the new Post home was purchased on January, 1923 at 6068 Ridge Avenue, where 88 meetings were held and then the present Post home was purchased at Pechin Street and Lyceum Avenue, Roxborough and since December, 1926 the meetings have been held there.

The Post has gradually increased its membership and with the members choosing outstanding men for their Commanders and assisting officers, it has prospered beyond the dreams of those whose ideas and ideals created the Post. The Commanders who have guided the Post during these years have been:

Hugh B. Giles.....	1920-21
Stephen C. Gilliard.....	1921-22
Harry W. Thomas.....	1922-23
John Langdon Jones.....	1923-24
Logan M. Dayton.....	1924-25
Charles A. Glanding.....	1925-26
Harry P. Prager.....	1926-27
Elmer E. Hutchinson.....	1927-28
Samuel P. Geary.....	1928-29
George A. Dessin.....	1929-30
Thomas H. A. Turner.....	1930-31
Oliver Mills.....	1931-32
Thomas U. Thring.....	1932-33
Charles W. Sowden.....	1933-34
William B. Bass, Jr.....	1934-35
Alvion P. Mosier.....	1935-36
Edward A. L. Dearden.....	1936-37
Louis M. Nicholson.....	1937-38
Thomas P. Wagner.....	1938-39
William A. Glifort.....	1939-40

It was agreed upon the starting of the Post, that no Post Commander could serve another term until every member in the Post had an opportunity to become a Commander, and in this way the Post has had many varied men at its head, whose ideas have made for progress and insured harmony and co-operation amongst the membership, their friends and the public of

this community, for which it is exceedingly thankful now.

Not only by the community was this great record of achievement approved but by the National Headquarters, Department of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia County Council V. F. W. of the U. S., also the delegates of the same recognized it by either electing or appointing many of these Past Commanders to official positions of prominence in the councils, and executive, legislative and formulative offices.

The community's recognition may be seen in the fact that they presented the flagpole on the lawn and in their response to the annual Veterans' Frolic held each year on the spacious lawn of one of the Post's patronesses, Mrs. Lily Lang Meyers. It is from this fete that the financial proceeds go to maintain the Post, buildings and grounds, welfare throughout the ward to the unfortunate, and to their own comrades, widows and orphans both here and at the National Home at Eaton Rapids, Michigan; and last but not least the scholarship of the University of Pennsylvania offered to the highest ranking student of Roxborough High School upon his or her graduation, as selected by the committee in charge.

Then we must remember the Annual Poppy Drive, the returns of which are used exclusively for welfare work at the National Home for Orphans; the visitation to the Veterans' Hospital at Coatesville, Penna., and at the Naval Hospital, Philadelphia, Penna, where the Post donates tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, writing paper, etc., and puts on a first class vaudeville show for the entertainment of the inmates.

Much thanks is due also to the late Mrs. Lida Kenworthy, whose magnificent donations of national flags and Post standards and the beautiful furniture for the meeting room causes expressions of admiration from the many guests who come to enjoy the hospitality of the Post and its Auxiliary.

The Post has also to its credit the formation of five other Posts of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in different wards of Philadelphia, its own Auxiliary, Bugle and Drum Corps, Home



Association, whose eleven elected directors have the responsibility of the maintenance of the Post and its buildings and grounds and the beautification of same; the band concerts sponsored at Gorgas' Park and on the Post lawn; its work in the drive for the new ambulance for the Memorial Hospital; its assistance, financial and moral, in all worthwhile drives and last but not least, the Iron Lung presented to Memorial Hospital, and its contribution to the youth movement of the ward.

The preservation of the mighty old oak tree in front of the Post Home, whose grateful shadows seem to be a halo over the Post, its members and progressive ideals, is another fitting mark of thoughtfulness. In Memorial Week, there are the Americanization Committee's visits to the local schools, the attendance at the public church Memorial Service, the exemplification of the miniature cemetery in the side lawn in memory of our departed comrades, and the ceremonies and visits to the cemeteries wherein the many departed warriors of the United States lie in peaceful slumber.

Another innovation of the Post is the Frolic Committee Banquet and entertainment to the workers on the Annual Frolic held in the Post Home each year, the joint installations of the Post and Auxiliary Officers, followed by another banquet and entertainment, and the climax, the Anniversary Banquet held each year in the P. O. S. of A. Hall, to honor the memory of the Post's foundation, to pay tribute to the outgoing Commander, to listen to the words of wisdom from the lips of U. S. Senators, Members of Congress, public officials of prominence and to hear from their own National, Department, County and Post Officers.

The Holy Scriptures read, "Cast thy bread upon the waters and it will return a hundred-fold," and this has proven true; for what a grateful public has given unto us, a thankful Post has returned, and it is to both that the Hattal-Taylor Post No. 333, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States owes its prominence and respect today.

WASHINGTON CAMP No. 50  
PATRIOTIC ORDER SONS OF AMERICA  
(Organized 1858)

HISTORY OF CAMP FIFTY

By JOSEPH S. CLARK, *Treasurer of Camp Fifty*

Camp Fifty of Roxborough was first installed by Camp Six, then of Norristown, as Camp 50 of Manayunk on May 28, 1858, although the foundation of the Camp was probably laid as far back as 1857. The following were charter members: James H. Rutherford, William J. Lamon, Isaac Jones, Samuel C. Rutherford, James Bryan, John J. Bonner, George C. Thompson, Joseph Cuthbert, C. F. Neuman, John W. Bryan, Charles Buzby, George J. Mitchell, E. F. Lawson, Sylvester C. Snodgrass, B. M. Simpson, Franklin C. Scalinger, Joseph Jobbins, W. C. Johnson, James Jones, Samuel Topham, Silas W. Miller, John H. Scott, and J. C. Anderson.

At the National Convention in New York on August 10, 1858, and at the State Convention in Lancaster on August 5, 1858, the Camp was represented by W. A. McRaith.

According to the history of the Order, the Camp is credited with being reorganized during the term of 1867-1868, and in the report of 1868-1869 is credited as a Camp that had been reorganized. And the Charter, framed and hanging in the anteroom, is dated 1869.

Some time after the Civil War the Camp moved into Lyceum Hall, in Roxborough, and the growth was only fair until about the year 1897, when the Camp took on new life and the membership started to increase by the hundreds.

In 1912, Camp 163 of Reading challenged us to a contest, and resulted in a gain of 650 members in six months' time. When the World War broke out the Camp purchased Liberty Bonds on a large scale, and at one time owned \$27,000 worth of the same. Over 250 of our members were in the World War, and one of

our soldier boy members rests in an unknown place in France. His name is John Booth. Five others were also killed overseas.

When the influenza epidemic broke out around 1919, the Camp met its full responsibility, and for months over one hundred members sick were reported week after week, some weeks a number of deaths, and all sick and death benefits were paid regularly.

In 1903 the membership of the Camp reached 1000, and again in 1919 it even went over the 2000 mark.

When the Roxborough High School was completed, the formal opening was in the form of a presentation of a large number of reproductions of fine paintings, which were presented on June 17, 1924.

In 1925 the Camp purchased the old Memorial Baptist Church building and remodelled it as you see it, at a cost of close to \$75,000, which is owned without any encumbrance.

We have been known for large marching clubs, and in 1913 paraded over 200 members in dress uniforms. In 1916 in Philadelphia over 400 paraded in Palm Beach suits. Some of our active workers were good member-getters, and many captured large State Camp prizes, which include several of our still active members.

#### VSISTATIONS

Always active, we have become popular for large visitations, the largest of which was to Reading in 1913, when over 600 members went along, with a make-up band of over 75 pieces, all members. Other visitations are too numerous to mention, one to Palmyra, New Jersey.

#### DEGREE TEAMS

Our degree teams were famous throughout the Order, and went to Camp after Camp doing the work in a manner that brought credit to the Camp and to Roxborough. About 15 years ago the team went to Scranton and performed at a call initiation of over 400 for Camp 430. On May 20th, 1939, about 15 of our younger members traveled to Pittsburgh and initiated a class of 40 for Camp 2 of Wilkinsburg.

The Memorial monument in Gorgas Park is

the result of carefully laid plans of Camp 50, who succeeded in getting the entire community interested, thus making Roxborough practically the first community in the nation to raise money for a World War Memorial, and one of our active members served as president of the same.

We were the first organization in the town to request the Fairmount Park Commission to put baseball grounds along the Wissahickon, and compiled a petition to the Park Commission over twenty years ago to make a golf course in this section, and had over fifty young golf players of the section at that time sign it, which petition was presented to the Park Commission by the Camp. Today this plan is being realized.

We have been a member of the Home of the Order at Chalfont since its inception, and since that time, until today, Camp 50 is the largest contributor to the support of the Home. Every year after the holiday season an entertainment is given at Chalfont by members and their families and friends, this year included.

We hold a \$500 bond in the State Camp Building, and offer to contribute it to the Order, if others will do likewise.

Every charity proposed by the Order is liberally supported by the Camp on the hills of Roxborough. Several years ago, during the floods of the middle west, an appeal was sent out by the Order for aid, benefits were held and, as on previous occasions, our Camp was among the first and largest contributors.

Therefore, on this, our anniversary occasion, when we thus briefly review just a few of the past events, our duty lies plainly before us to carry on the work of the oldest patriotic fraternity, so that we may soon get back into our place as the largest Camp in the Order.



HETTY A. JONES POST No. 2  
GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC  
DEPARTMENT OF PENNSYLVANIA  
(Organized 1874)

The Hetty A. Jones Post of the Grand Army of the Republic is no longer in existence. Its last



member, George Gillet, who was also its last Commander, died April 20, 1937. The Post was created March 9, 1874, and named after Hetty A. Jones, a nurse in the Civil War. The Post was granted a charter on November 4, 1892, which contains the names of the following signers:

SYLVESTER YARDLEY  
JOHN E. FRANTZ  
JAMES SCHOFIELD  
W. CLARK JOHNSON  
SIMON NELSON  
HIRAM R. LIPPEN  
GEORGE P. MITCHELL  
BENJAMIN H. JENKINSON

Yardley, Mitchell, and Jenkinson were constituted the Council of Administration by this charter.

The community has sustained an inevitable and an irreplaceable loss in the passing away of all its veterans of the Civil War before this Two Hundred Fiftieth Anniversary. Many of our elementary school children will remember the last visits of Commander Gillet and his comrades to the schools, as well as the exercises at which he so regularly presided at the monument and in the churches, His geniality, patriotism, and love for young people commended him to us all. To the end he carried on his duties with unflagging fidelity. Although far advanced in years he was one of the youngest of the veterans in the country, having entered the service in 1863, when only twelve years of age. He was returned home by the authorities but re-entered the service in 1865 before the end of the war. He died at the beginning of his eighty-eighth year. A fine photograph of him hangs at the headquarters of the G. A. R. on Fountain Street, opposite the Roxborough High School. He was a member of the Post for exactly sixty-three years, his death occurring on the anniversary of his being mustered in.

## SAMUEL CLEGG CAMP No. 9 SONS OF VETERANS OF THE CIVIL WAR (Organized 1883)

The Samuel Clegg Camp of the Sons of Union Veterans was formed as an auxiliary to the Hetty A. Jones Post of the Grand Army. Today this organization carries on the Memorial Day observances in place of the extinct Post. At the three-quarter century mark since the end of the Civil War many of these Sons of Veterans are already men who have lived their three-score years and ten and are advancing toward four-score. So the organization now includes grandsons and even great-grandsons of the veterans of that far-away war.

It is interesting to note that the Samuel Clegg Camp, organized February 8, 1883, was able to send about twenty of its members into service in the World War. One of these gave his life in that service.

In 1929, following the dissolution of the General G. K. Warren Post No. 15 of the G. A. R. in Manayunk about 1927-1928, the Sons of Union Veterans of the James MacFayden Camp No. 3, of Manayunk, were consolidated with Samuel Clegg Camp. The Camp, thus strengthened, celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary in 1933.

In 1937 the Roxborough G. A. R. Post No. 12 came to an end with the death of its Commander and last survivor, George Gillet, who, in addition to his local duties, had also served two years as Commander of the Department of Pennsylvania.

The present officers of the Samuel Clegg Camp are:

Commander ..... Joseph Swan  
Senior Vice-Commander.....Ralph Davis  
Junior Vice-Commander...Thomas Chase  
Secretary.....John Kimpel  
Treasurer.....William H. Mennig  
Chaplain.....Harry Leeser  
Trustees.....William Tompkins,  
Samuel Rutherford, Joseph Davis<sup>5</sup>

The present membership is sixty-five.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph S. Davis, the oldest member, is 79.

WOMEN'S RELIEF CORPS  
HETTY A. JONES POST No. 12  
GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC  
(Organized 1883)

This Corps of women was formed as an auxiliary to the Hetty A. Jones Post. It has maintained two principal activities through the years—the serving of luncheons to the men of the Post and later to the Sons of Union Veterans and others participating in Memorial Day or pre-Memorial Day exercises; and the launching of a boat annually at the point where the Wissahickon Creek enters the Schuylkill, with a floral tribute to the unknown soldiers and sailors who died in the War of the Rebellion. The boat launching occurs on the Sunday afternoon preceding Memorial Day. In recent years the Corps has served one luncheon on the Wednesday preceding Memorial Day, while the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Sons of Union Veterans has assumed responsibility for serving on two other days when visitations are made to the schools of the community, and for Memorial Day.

Officers of the Relief Corps are elected annually. The present officers are as follows:

*President*.....Mrs. Mame Freas  
*Senior Vice-President*..Mrs. Jennie Hunter  
*Junior Vice-President*.Mrs. Emily Hillwein  
*Secretary*.....Mrs. Elizabeth Blundin  
*Treasurer*.....Mrs. Anna Mellor  
*Chaplain*.....Mrs. Maude Levering  
*Conductor*.....Miss Eleanor Platt  
*Guard*.....Mrs. Fern Levering

There are thirty-two members in good standing.

LADIES' AUXILIARY  
SAMUEL CLEGG CAMP No. 9  
SONS OF UNION VETERANS  
OF THE CIVIL WAR  
(Organized 1893)

Ten years after the forming of the Women's Relief Corps of the G. A. R., a similar organization was begun as an auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans in Roxborough. They have served luncheons on the days of the school visitations and on Memorial Day. Each year on the Friday before Memorial Day this Auxiliary holds its own services for the unknown dead of the Civil War, while a chair is also draped for the dead of the World War and for any members of the Auxiliary who may have passed away during the year. This organization is a beneficiary as well as a patriotic group. There are fifty-nine members, with twenty additional forming a Junior Auxiliary.

All flags used by the local camp of the Sons of Union Veterans have been presented by this Ladies' Auxiliary.

The following are the officers in 1940:

*President*.....Mrs. Margaret Mennig  
*Vice-President*.....Mrs. Edith Chase  
*Secretary*.....Mrs. Margaret Sutch  
*Treasurer*.....Mrs. Margaret Levering  
*Chaplain*.....Mrs. Edna Mennig  
*Patriotic Instr.*...Mrs. Florence Tompkins  
*Guide*.....Mrs. Fern Levering  
*Ass't. Guide*.....Mrs. Rachel Rile  
*Color Guards*.....Mrs. Lena Lare,  
Mrs. Annie Freeman  
*Pianist*.....Mrs. Margaret McKinney  
*Inside Guard*.....Mrs. Laura Blei  
*Outside Guard*....Mrs. Bessie Whitehead  
*Press Cor.*.....Mrs. Daisy Fisher

The only living charter member is Mrs. Sutch, who has also served as secretary for forty out of a possible forty-seven years.



## BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS

*It would be impossible, within the limits of our time and space, to give an account of even the oldest privately owned business enterprises in this community. Under the head of "Business Organizations" we are therefore limiting ourselves somewhat narrowly to material of general interest which we have been able to secure. Reference to the Manayunk Business Men's Association will be found in the account of the physical development of the community which follows later in this book.*



### THE ROXBOROUGH BUSINESSMEN'S ASSOCIATION

*(Organized in 1920 as "Ridge Avenue Business Men's Association of Roxborough")*

Roxborough Businessmen have always played an important part in the community, individually and as a group.

For twenty years they have conducted an annual excursion to Wildwood, New Jersey, which usually attracts from 1500 to 2000 people, who enjoy the outing immensely.

Early in 1939 the Roxborough Businessmen's Association was reorganized and new impetus was given to bringing people to this section to do their shopping. Christmas, 1939, will be remembered as the most active the community has ever seen.

The Association is giving full cooperation to the 250th Anniversary Committee. Fireworks under their auspices on July Fourth will be one of the high spots of the celebration.

Officers who are steering a progressive course for the Association are: President, F. Earl Westcott; Vice-President, Irving Lubar; Secretary, George A. Spencer; Treasurer, Russell Schofield.

The Board of Directors includes the officers and these additional men: Jules Baron, Adolph Lang, Robert Milligan, F. Emmett Fitzpatrick, Harry Wentzel, George M. Bovard and A. F. Skrobanek.



### ROXBOROUGH OFFICE OF THE ERIE NATIONAL BANK OF PHILADELPHIA

*(Opened 1937)*

The Roxborough Office of The Erie National Bank of Philadelphia opened July 19, 1937, at

the northwest corner of Ridge Avenue and Green Lane.

The Main Office of The Erie National Bank, which was established in 1927, is located at Erie Avenue and Sixth Street.

The community had been without adequate banking facilities since March, 1933. This bank is a depository of the United States Government, State of Pennsylvania and City of Philadelphia, is a member of Federal Reserve System and through its membership in the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the deposits are insured up to \$5,000 for each depositor.

The bank's policy has been to render community service and the Roxborough Office, under the management of A. F. Skrobanek, a lifelong resident of Roxborough, is equipped to give service in every field of banking endeavor. The staff is mostly composed of residents of this section and in addition two local well-known business men, J. Elliott Flanagan, of the Freeland Felt Works, and F. Emmett Fitzpatrick, funeral director, are members of the Board of Directors. A former resident of the community, Thomas K. Silverwood, is also a member of the Board. Local residents on the staff are: Jane C. Borbidge, Elmer M. Harlan, John W. Street, Robert Stewart, Harry Kleckner and Joseph Platchek.

A full list of names of officers and directors of the bank follows:

#### OFFICERS

*Chairman of the Board* Allan Sutherland  
*President*..... William Steele, 3rd  
*Vice-President*..... J. Wesley Masland  
*Vice-President*..... Julius P. Leof  
*Cashier*..... Donald B. Whitney  
*Assistant Cashier*..... K. Arthur Merrill  
*Assistant Cashier*..... J. Pierce Maurer  
*Assistant Cashier*..... A. F. Skrobanek

#### DIRECTORS

Raymond A. Cabrey	Harry E. Shaw
F. Emmett Fitzpatrick	Thomas K. Silverwood
J. Elliott Flanagan	William Steele, 3rd
Julius P. Leof	Allan Sutherland
Lionel F. Levy	Edward T. Taws
J. Wesley Masland	Morgan H. Thomas
Arthur E. Moorshead	Alexander Van Straaten
I. Smith Raspin	Robert M. Wilson
	Arthur L. Wright

## CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

### THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

*(Founded 1764)*

The German Society is not a local group, but it is included here because of its connections with this community.

As will be noted from above this organization was founded in 1764 in old Zion-St. Michael Lutheran Church to assist German immigrants.

The Society owns its own hall at Marshall and Spring Garden Streets, where it also maintains the largest German library in the United States, with 60,000 volumes catalogued and up-to-date. It has a large archive with valuable manuscripts on the history of the Germans in America. Beside maintaining a bureau for needy Germans, it has free beds in the Lankenau Hospital and conducts a free medical and legal department. The oldest German Society in the country, it has never deviated from its original purposes and has weathered all storms successfully, having over 700 members at the present time. A center of cultural activities, the Society also conducts two prize examinations each year for graduates of local high schools, some of which have been won by Roxborough High students, and it distributes two scholarships, the George Schleicher and the Carl F. Lauber awards to students at the University of Pennsylvania. Many residents of the Twenty-first Ward have been and still are members of the Society. The secretary of the Society for the past six years has been Pastor S. G. von Bosse of Bethanien Lutheran Church in Roxborough. Last December the Society observed its 175th anniversary.

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### THE ROXBOROUGH TURNERS

*(Founded 1872)*

The Roxborough Turners, originally known as the "Germania Turn Verein," were founded in 1872, with headquarters on Leverington Avenue. In recent years they have established their present well-equipped building on Leverington Avenue near Pechin Street.

The American Turners' original society was begun in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1848, with the slogan, "Mens Sana in Corpore Sano" ("sound mind in sound body").

The Turners envision an American public not only physically fit but also mentally alert and straight-thinking. Their principles have always been, "Liberty against all oppression. Tolerance against all fanaticism. Reason against all superstition. Justice against all exploitation."

The original officers of the Roxborough Turners in 1872 were:

*President*.....Jacob Koerle  
*Secretary*.....August Goldbeck

The officers in 1940 are:

*President*.....John J. Grow  
*Vice-President*.....Joseph Hill  
*Recording Secretary*.....Charles C. Barr  
*Financial Secretary*.....James Benischeck  
*Treasurer*.....Ernest C. Miller  
*Chief of Gymnasium*.....Fred H. Blei  
*Assistant Chief, Gym.*..William De Haven  
*Librarian*.....Robert Schmaithman  
*Chairman, Entertainment Committee*  
Thomas Faul  
*Delegates to National Turners*  
Charles Hartman and Fred H. Blei

These men, with Thomas R. Kirbyson, form the present Board of Directors.



THE MANAYUNK AND  
WISSAHICKON BRANCHES  
FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA  
*(Originally the Fourth Branch of the Free  
Library, opened April 2, 1894  
at Lyceum Hall)*

The Wissahickon Branch of the Free Library was opened January 26, 1909, and the Manayunk Branch began to serve this community February 5, 1909. An account of both branches since 1918, prepared by Miss Agnes B. Kelso of the Manayunk Branch, follows:

RESUME SINCE 1918

With the end of the World War came the golden opportunity for Free Library growth and service. The libraries were well stocked, and the public turned to them for diversion and study, after the devastating war years. This continued until 1931.

In 1932 City Councils were obliged to cut the library appropriation so drastically that the Trustees of the Free Library were forced to close the Branches three mornings and three evenings of each week, and greatly reduce the number of new books.

In this vicinity, where both Branches are far from the main thoroughfares, and the hills make hard traveling, the confusing change in the hours was even more of a calamity to the Branches than the shortage of books. That came gradually.

Not to get new books was disappointing, but to find their library doors closed against them, was a rebuff.

So the people lost interest, the Branches lost patronage, and circulation, and for lack of books was steadily declining.

In 1937, the plight of the libraries became so acute that Mr. William B. Forney, Jr., wrote an appeal to the Suburban Press, which inspired the Roxborough Lions' Club to launch a local campaign for books for our two Branches.

The committee did splendid work, and approximately 6000 books were collected for Manayunk and Wissahickon Branches. No other locality in Philadelphia made any such record.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE LOCAL LIBRARY HISTORY

1918—Manayunk Branch—Honor Roll Board for 16th Division, Twenty-first Ward erected Nov. 6 by citizens.

1928—Bronze tablet placed on Dupont Street wall of Manayunk Branch. Memorial to soldiers in World War from 16th Division, Twenty-first Ward. Took place of Honor Roll Board—gift of John S. Turner.

1929—Wissahickon Branch—Resignation of Librarian, Miss Mary L. Reynolds. Appointment of Miss Edith C. Moyer as Librarian.

1932—Both Branches affected by drastic cut in Library appropriation, which necessitated closing of Branches three evenings and three mornings each week—and cutting book appropriations to a fraction of what they should be.

1937—Wissahickon Branch—Resignation of Miss Edith C. Moyer—March 1st. At request of Chief Librarian, Franklin H. Price, Librarian of Manayunk Branch supervised Wissahickon Branch also in interim. Appointment of Miss Marie F. McGarvey, as Librarian—Dec. 15, 1937. Local book drive sponsored by Lions' Club—collected 6000 books, breaking all local records throughout the city.

1939—Death of John F. L. Morris (Jan. 26)—Trustee of the Free Library of Philadelphia—donor of ground on which Manayunk Branch was built—friend of both Branches.



DISTRICT ONE,  
PHILADELPHIA COUNCIL  
BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA  
*(Organized 1912)*

The Boy Scout Movement was founded in England by Lord Baden Powell in 1907. It was first organized in America in New York City in 1910 and the Philadelphia Council and

its first Troops were formed the same year. In our thirty years of existence in the United States we have grown to 1,400,000 Scouts and 315,000 Scout Leaders and in those years over 9,000,000 have been enrolled in its organization. The world organization of Scouting has grown to 2,800,000 Scouts in 48 countries, Germany and Russia not included. Our oath and laws are fundamentally the same throughout the world and every four years we have an international jamboree in some part of the world attended by Scouts from all countries. Our organization was chartered by an Act of Congress, June 15th, 1916 and we share that honor with the American Red Cross, the only two organizations receiving such a Charter and filing our Annual Report in the Congressional Record.

In our local community the first Troops were organized in 1912, when Troop 80 at St. Timothy's Church and Troop 114 at the Roxborough Baptist Church received their charters. Troop 80 dropped their registration in 1923 but Troop 114 has had continuous service since, for 28 years. In addition to being the oldest Troop in the community, Troop 114 has the unique honor of having two Leaders, F. Oliver Keely and Russell S. Keely serve as Scoutmaster and Assistant Scoutmaster for 25 years, relinquishing their active leadership in 1937 to Charles Wonderly, the present Scoutmaster, but continuing to serve on the Troop Committee. This is one of the highest records of service in the Philadelphia Council. Among the other old Troops in our District still in active service are Troop 51, Manayunk Baptist Church and Troop 64, Northern Home, both chartered in 1916; Troop 215, Leverington Presbyterian Church, 1918; Troop 216, St. David's P. E. Church, and Troop 176, First M. E. Church, both in 1920, and Troop 99, Ebenezer M. E. Church, in 1923.

District One, comprising the communities of Roxborough, Manayunk, Wissahickon and East Falls, was formed in 1918 as part of the ten Districts in the Philadelphia Council. Mr. Franklyn Spiese was appointed the first District Executive serving till the appointment of Dr. Wm. M. Hinkle in 1919. In 1923, Mr. Stafford

H. Parker was appointed to succeed Dr. Hinkle, who resigned due to poor health. When Mr. Parker moved to Glenside in 1927, Mr. Joseph R. Sumner was appointed District Executive, still serving in that capacity. Our present enrollment is seventeen Troops and two Cub Packs and one Sea Scout Patrol, with a total of 420 Scouts and 85 Leaders serving as Scoutmasters or Troop Committeemen. The Philadelphia Council enrollment at the end of 1939 was 426 Scout units with 4000 Leaders and 11,700 Scouts. We have had Scout Troops in almost every church in the community at one time or another and our present Scout Troops are located as follows:

Troop 33—Church of the Good Shepherd, East Falls, Vincent Rodgers, Scoutmaster.

Troop 51—Manayunk Baptist Church, John Moore, Scoutmaster.

Troop 54—Kendrick Recreation Center, Herbert S. Murphy, Scoutmaster.

Troop 64—Northern Home, Ronald Harmer, Scoutmaster.

Troop 81—St. Timothy's Church, James Massey, Scoutmaster.

Troop 99—Ebenezer M. E. Church, William Nickel, Scoutmaster.

Troop 114—Roxborough Baptist Church, Charles A. Wonderly, Scoutmaster.

Troop 161—Emmanuel M. E. Church, Walter Robinson, Scoutmaster.

Troop 176—First M. E. Church, Elmer Harlan, Scoutmaster.

Troop 213—Manayunk Presbyterian Church, William Kirkpatrick, Scoutmaster.

Troop 215 — Leverington Presbyterian Church, Raymond M. Turner, Scoutmaster.

Troop 216—St. David's P. E. Church, Harry J. Wylie, Scoutmaster.

Troop 275—North Light Boys' Club, E. S. Ostberg, Scoutmaster.

Troop 276—Grace Lutheran Church, Griffith R. Mellor, Scoutmaster.

Troop 310—Bethanien Lutheran Church, John J. Kandra, Scoutmaster.

Troop 311—Ridge Avenue M. E. Church, Philip W. Brett, Scoutmaster.



Troop 331, Falls of Schuylkill Baptist Church, Everett R. Verbeek, Scoutmaster.

Cub Pack 176, First M. E. Church, Carroll D. Charles, Cubmaster.

Cub Pack 216, St. David's P. E. Church, William H. Kelley, Cubmaster.

Sea Scout Patrol Albotross (176)—First M. E. Church, Dr. J. R. Christy, Skipper.

We have held an annual encampment in June since 1920, training our Scouts how to camp and every year over half of our Troops go to our Council Camps for a week either at Treasure Island, in the Delaware River above Trenton, or to the Hart Reservation at Sumnertown, Pa. We have held an annual dinner for our Scout Leaders since 1921 and through training of our Scout Leaders in program and activities we are always trying to train the Scouts in our charge to be better citizens, and develop leadership and character through the Scout Tests and advancement. We have been honored by the physicians of the Twenty-first Ward who presented us with a First Aid Trophy awarded each year to the Troop receiving the highest honors in the annual First Aid Contest. This Trophy is now held by Troop 64, Northern Home, who have won it for the past two years. The Lions' Club of Roxborough presented us in 1938 with a beautiful placque to be awarded annually in May to the most outstanding Troop with the best record in all parts of the Scouting program during the year. Troop 99 was the first Troop to receive this honor in 1938 and last year Troop 114 won the honor. At the present time the 1940 Troop to be honored is still undecided. We thank these organizations for their interest in the work of Scouting among the boys of the community.

Last year one of our Scout Leaders presented the District with a Camping Trophy in memory of George S. Dayton, first Scoutmaster of Troop 80 at St. Timothy's Church and an active Leader in Scouting until his death. Troops compete for this trophy each year at the annual encampment and the best camping Troop is awarded the custody of the trophy and the District Flag for one year. Troop 114 had the honor of winning this trophy in 1939. Our District has been named

by our Leaders as the "Edward H. Noble District One, "to honor the name of a man who served as Scoutmaster of Troop 51 at the Manayunk Baptist Church and was an active officer in the district organization until his death and whose life as a Scouter was a worthy tribute to service to boyhood in this community. Our District while under the jurisdiction of the Philadelphia Council in questions of policy and program, has its own organization of District Leaders representing each Troop and meeting monthly to plan the district activities and create a spirit of fellowship and exchange of ideas among the various Scoutmasters. Mr. F. Oliver Keely was the first District Chairman serving until 1924, when Harry E. Fox was elected to succeed him. Mr. Fox served until 1938, when the present Chairman, Mr. Robert Flanders, was elected. Our first District Secretary and Treasurer was Edward H. Noble, who served until his death and was succeeded by Herbert S. Murphy in 1936. The present Secretary and Treasurer, Charles A. Wonderly, was elected Secretary and Treasurer of the District last year.

In 1929 we held our first major district activity with a three-act show, "His Royal Highness," with a cast of Scouts from all the local Troops. In 1932 our major activity was a Merit Badge Show and Exhibitions at the Roxborough Baptist Church, followed by the Scout Circus in 1935 and the last major activity, "The Big Broadcast," in 1938. All of these major activities were under the direction of the District Executive and his staff of Neighborhood Commissioners, William Steele, Frank L. Thomas and J. Alvin Mills. All of these men are still active except Mr. Mills, who has been succeeded by William Radabaugh. These major activities are held every third year following the policy of the Philadelphia Council in order that all new Scouts may have a chance to participate in these shows.

We as Leaders and Boy Scouts of District One, Philadelphia Council, congratulate our community on its 250th Anniversary and we are proud to be a part of the glorious past of its history and we hope to continue in the future to serve the boys of this community, giving them

through Scouting the opportunity of becoming better men and more useful citizens, not only locally, but to our city, state and country are well.



## THE ROXBOROUGH MALE CHORUS

(Organized 1922)

In the Fall of 1922, Mr. William H. Hoedt, then President of the Parents' Association of the Twenty-first Ward, together with Mr. T. Wilford Schofield, first conceived the idea of forming an all-male singing organization in this community. They solicited the aid of Mr. William C. Ames, prominent in local musical circles, who readily agreed to assume the musical directorship, and set out to contact the local male talent and create public interest. The response to their efforts was so spontaneous that in a very short time a meeting was called and the "Roxborough Male Chorus" became an actuality. By-laws were drawn up designating the purpose of the new group as "To bring together men interested in male chorus music and to work in conjunction with the Parents' Association of the Twenty-first Ward."

The following officers were elected:

*President*.....T. Wilford Schofield  
*Vice-President*.....John Fields, Jr.  
*Secy. and Treas.*.....John M. Horrocks  
*Librarian*.....W. Hyatt Snyder  
*Musical Director*.....William C. Ames  
*Accompanist*.....William E. Tippet

Under the able direction of Mr. Ames the Chorus made rapid progress and many additional singers were soon enrolled in the membership; with the result that in a comparatively short period the efficiency of the Chorus had reached the point where Mr. Ames felt that the men were ready to be presented to the people of Roxborough in concert. Accordingly, the initial public appearance was made on April 24, 1923, at the Green Valley Country Club, with Mr. Ames conducting. Assisting artists at this first Musicale were two of Philadelphia's foremost vocalists, namely, Emily Stokes Hagar, soprano,

and George C. A. Detwiler, basso. In addition, a String Trio was featured, composed of well-known Roxborough musicians. They were Lawrence A. Miller, violinist; Stanley Hart Cauffman, cellist, and Mrs. George C. Boker, pianist.

This performance was so well received that it was decided to present a similar musicale in the Fall of the same year, and the Chorus has continued to give these two formal concerts annually for the past seventeen years. Most of them have been held in the Auditorium of the Roxborough High School. In addition to the regularly scheduled appearances, the Chorus, since its inception, has willingly performed at various intervals for many local religious, charitable and civic groups in the Twenty-first Ward.

Early in 1936, after thirteen years of faithful service, Mr. Ames requested that he be relieved of his duties as conductor, and the Chorus consented, albeit very reluctantly, as every member realized that Mr. Ames had been largely responsible for the development of the organization to its well-earned position as a musical group of the first rank. It then became imperative to find a leader, preferably local, with the necessary qualifications to fill the gap left by Mr. Ames' retirement. The Chorus was fortunate indeed in securing a man well versed in musical knowledge and the technique of choral work, in the person of Mr. Earl Henson, to take over its leadership, and under his direction and tireless efforts for the past three years, great progress has been accomplished.

With Mr. Henson's guidance the Chorus has widened its activities in no small degree. In the Spring of 1939 it became affiliated with the Associated Glee Clubs of America and participated in a great massed Concert sponsored by this national organization at the New York World's Fair in July, 1939. For 1940, the Fair management has signally honored the Roxborough Chorus by inviting it to return and give a private concert as a separate unit. However, the Chorus still remains true and steadfast to the original purpose of its founding, and stands ready to serve Roxborough in the future as it



has in the intervening years since its formation.

None of the original officers of the Chorus are now connected actively with it, but the present governing body is imbued with the same love of music and the same desire to improve its presentation that was in the hearts of the founders. The present officers are:

*President*.....William T. Cooper  
*Vice-President*.....Oliver W. Grow  
*Secretary*.....Gordon R. Virkler  
*Secretary for Associate Members*

Melvin E. Marple  
*Treasurer*.....William H. Goshow  
*Librarian*.....William N. Snyder  
*Musical Director*.....Earl Henson  
*Accompanist*.....H. Oliver Williams

While a few of the Charter Members of the Chorus still remain active, new talent has continually been added to its ranks. The original by-laws are still in force, permitting any male sufficiently well versed in music and in the purpose of the Chorus to become a member after his application has been approved by the Director and the Membership Committee. The list of present Active Members numbers fifty-three, including the officers.

In 1938 the Chorus was enriched by the forming of a Ladies' Auxiliary, the purpose of which is to work in conjunction with and to further the interests of the parent organization. Mrs. Helen L. Smith served as the first President. The present officers are:

*President*.....Mrs. Melvin E. Marple  
*Vice-President*.....Mrs. M. W. Blair  
*Secretary*.....Mrs. Earl Henson  
*Treasurer*.....Mrs. Robert C. Williams

The membership of the Ladies' Auxiliary is twenty-one.

From the very beginning the Chorus has been supported financially almost entirely by its patrons, the Associate Members, who have so generously contributed to the monetary needs of the organization. Because of such aid, the Chorus has been able to bring to the community the very finest in music. Many of the outstanding figures of musical Philadelphia and New York have made their only personal appear-

ances here in Roxborough as guests of this group. Roxborough may well be proud of its Male Chorus.



## THE ROXBOROUGH SYMPHONY

### ORCHESTRA

(Organized 1932)

In searching for the proper data which should be or could be used as the starting point in setting down the story of how and why the Roxborough Symphony Orchestra was formed, your historian first picked the year 1932, then promptly corrected that date back to somewhere between 1910 and 1915. He finally decided these dates were both wrong by something over two hundred years.

The Philadelphia Bureau of Music tells us that the Roxborough Symphony Orchestra started in 1703, only at that time it was not known as such. It seems one Johannes Kelpius and several of his cofreres who lived along the banks of the Wissahickon, played on the viol, haut-boy, trump and kettledrums in the ancient Gloria Dei Church on Water Street below Christian, at the ordination of Justus Falkner.

This seems to be the first record of a musical performance to be given in Pennsylvania and it was given by men who, one might say, lived in Roxborough.

We will not claim that the members of the Orchestra today are direct descendants of these men, at least not to the best of our knowledge, but we do say that the urge to gather together in harmonious groups, both musically and socially, must have descended on quite a few Roxborough inhabitants, for along about 1910 or a little later we find a handful of men meeting together once or twice a month for the sole purpose of playing music and spending an enjoyable evening.

This group would meet in their various homes or at the Odd Fellows' Hall and eventually at Turners' Hall. As time went on new recruits would join the group until their number had grown to fifteen or twenty instruments.

This happy fellowship continued for some fifteen years or more, always playing the more serious type of music (or nearly always) purely for their own diversion and enjoyment, with no thought for the future and its possibilities.

After the group had grown to the size of a small orchestra, Mr. Wm. Kester began to take the part of leader and conduct their meetings so as to have better rhythm and precision. While there would naturally be a member of the group who would drop out now and then, there were new faces to come in so that their number was quite regular over all the years. There were, however, a few most enthusiastic members who had always been active and still are to this day.

As nearly as we can ascertain, the names of those original men were as follows: Ernest F. Miller, Conrad K. Donnell, Russell H. Cunningham, J. Edward Holgate, Charles S. Hartman and William Hohlfeld.

With this picture in mind we now arrive at the year 1931, which was destined to be the turning point in the future of this group of musicians. Dr. Wm. Marshall Bland had been making inquiries about the whereabouts of any group of non-professional musicians and he finally discovered these men, promptly joining them. He was a violinist of excellent ability and had also had considerable orchestral experience so that he was a real asset to the men as a player.

When the opportunity came for someone else to assume the baton, he offered to step in and it was found that he had real ability as a conductor, procuring better results from the men than had been the case before Dr. Bland pointed out that there was some very good talent among the members and there was every reason to look forward to their forming a permanent organization as a full-fledged non-professional symphony orchestra. Strong efforts were made to fill up the various sections of the orchestra by procuring more new members, especially those playing instruments needed in a symphonic group but still lacking at the time.

They continued playing with Dr. Bland regu-

larly conducting, still for their own enjoyment, with no definite organization effected and no particular plans except a hazy idea for some time in the future. Early in 1932 it was suggested that they should definitely organize with the view of giving a benefit concert for the aid of the unemployed of the Twenty-first Ward, a result of the Depression. This idea took root and the group, now numbering approximately forty members, held their first business meeting on the evening of August 29, 1932, at Turners' Hall on Leverington Avenue, Roxborough, where they had been regularly playing for a long time.

The first serious blow to fall on the group was the forced resignation of Dr. Bland, their guiding star, whose post with the U. S. Veterans' Hospital was transferred to Tuscaloosa, Alabama. If the plan for the benefit concert was to continue, a new conductor of experience must be procured at once. The President, Mr. Ernest F. Miller, perhaps the most active member and one of the original group from the first, went to see Mr. Stanley Hart Cauffman, having heard that he was an experienced orchestral man, and asked if he would lead the orchestra. Mr. Cauffman talked with Dr. Bland, getting Dr. Bland's ideas and aims for the group, with the result that Mr. Cauffman did step in for the emergency when it was finally necessary for Dr. Bland to leave. The business of serious rehearsals was thus able to continue without interruption.

To return to the first business meeting: the first entry in the Minute Book will be of interest so that we quote it in part: "At a Meeting of the ORIGINATORS of the ORCHESTRA held on Monday Evening, August 29, 1932, the following officers were elected:

*President*.....Ernest F. Miller  
*Vice-President*.....Frank J. Miller  
*Secretary*.....Conrad K. Donnell  
*Treasurer*.....Henry V. Tarbuck  
*Conductor*.....Stanley Hart Cauffman

The present name, Roxborough Symphony Orchestra, was also chosen at this meeting so that at last they had a staff of officers and directors, a conductor, a name and a concert for which to prepare.



Enthusiasm was running high and efforts were made in earnest to put the orchestra on a permanent footing with the means to pay its own way as it went along. It needed music for its library, it had rent to pay for rehearsals once a week and there would be expense to be met in connection with the concert soon to be given.

To Ernest F. Miller must go the lion's share of the credit for the full development of the orchestra as it is today. It was he who kept the enthusiasm active and inspired everyone to really "dig in" and work for the future of the orchestra. He was responsible for obtaining more paid-up patrons than any other member and it was and still is for that matter, Ernest F. Miller who looks after the little details as well as the larger ones, seeing to it that schedules go along smoothly. Mr. Cauffman also worked hard with Mr. Miller in the beginning, in obtaining patrons and attending to other outside business matters for the orchestra.

The Benefit Concert was finally given on Monday evening, October 3, 1932, at the Roxborough High School Auditorium under the auspices of the Parents' Public School Association (now known as the Parents' and Teachers' Association). The attendance was very good and the concert was well received. Mr. Henry Gurney had fortunately been obtained as soloist. A silver offering was taken as the audience departed, which was turned over to relief organizations.

The orchestra membership as shown by the first program, consisted of 26 in the string sections, 7 in the woodwind, 8 in the brass, 1 drummer and 1 piano; a total of 43 players. The program also lists thirty patrons who had subscribed for a season of three concerts, two others to follow this one.

And so with the first concert behind them successfully, a list of 30 patrons, some new music and Turners' Hall wherein to rehearse, the orchestra settled down to regular routine. The Board of Directors met at intervals on rehearsal nights at the Hall, then gradually drifted into meeting at one another's homes.

A second Concert was prepared and Mr.

Louis Angeloty, violinist, was the soloist, Mrs. Angeloty being his accompanist in the second half of the program. This concert was also well received, a good-sized audience was present, and after its completion, work immediately proceeded for the third and last concert of the season, to be given in May.

Mr. Henri Scott was by great good fortune obtained as soloist and Dr. Bland came all the way from Tuscaloosa to conduct two numbers. Although the orchestra was actually the result of Dr. Bland's vision, he had not yet heard them in actual concert, and his hurried visit was a treat to both Dr. Bland and the orchestra, too.

The concert was given on May 22, 1933. It was as successful as the previous ones and the patron list continued to grow. The first season came to an end with the future bright and with the determination to make this orchestra a real force in the community. The standard of music played was from the first, held on a high plane. Encouragement was given the Roxborough High School players to be eligible for membership in this more experienced group.

With the resignation of Mr. Cauffman after the first concert of the second season, 1933, it was very necessary to find some one to take his place quickly. Mr. Haydn Marriott had joined the string section earlier in the season and as he had some little experience with the baton, he was invited to assume leadership. He took hold at once so that the regular mid-winter concert was given on schedule as well as the following spring concert, thus rounding out the orchestra's second full season.

Mr. Marriott continued his leadership all through the third season but his health was failing him and after seeing the orchestra through its last concert of the third season in the spring of 1935, he was forced to resign, to the regret of all concerned.

The President of the orchestra, Mr. Miller, felt that the time had come to bring the attention of everyone in the community to the work that the orchestra was doing and that formation of a Women's Auxiliary would be an asset, especially in obtaining more patrons. He talked

the matter over with Mrs. Frederick Froriep, who agreed heartily with the idea and asked Mr. Miller for a list of names of ladies who might be interested.

On November 11, 1934, seven wives of members of the orchestra met at her house, discussing the project from a preliminary standpoint without taking any immediate steps except to agree that they could be of service in establishing the orchestra more firmly in the community and that they should cooperate with it. These original seven ladies were: Mrs. Frederick Froriep, Mrs. Ernest F. Miller, Mrs. Harry V. Tarbuck, Mrs. Wm. Hartman, Mrs. Harmon Robinson, Jr., Mrs. Robert Jackson, and Mrs. Leon Newbaker.

After a lapse of over a month, Mrs. Newbaker arranged for another meeting to be held at her home on the evening of January 16, 1935. This meeting was attended by ten ladies and a definite organization was effected. Three officers were chosen at this meeting: Mrs. Frederick Froriep, President; Mrs. Harmon Robinson, Jr., Treasurer, and Mrs. Leon Newbaker, Secretary. Mrs. Adam Sutton was elected Vice-President at the next ensuing meeting in February. A Constitution was adopted, Article I of which recorded the official name as The Women's Auxiliary of the R. S. O. Article II states in no uncertain terms that "the object of this Association shall be, first: to promote interest *in* and to raise funds *for* the R. S. O.; second: to advance the social interests of the members."

The Auxiliary lost no time putting into action the fund-raising phase of their activities. A benefit was arranged at Jeffries Roxborough Theater for February 18-21, only one month after their organization. Success attended this first enterprise and their treasury showed a satisfactory balance on hand. The purchase of a bassoon was the first financial contribution to the orchestra, followed from time to time by the purchase of new music, defraying expenses of soloists engaged for concerts and helping to meet other concert expenses. The orchestra greatly appreciates the Auxiliary and feels that it is an invaluable asset to them.

The Auxiliary has entertained the members at social gatherings each season since its inception, which has in no small measure helped to knit together the bonds of social good fellowship more strongly than ever.

Each Anniversary Meeting (January) of the Auxiliary is held at the home of Mrs. Newbaker, all the other meetings rotating to the homes of the various members, with a social evening upon the completion of the business calendar. Each Anniversary Meeting boasts a birthday cake with the appropriate number of candles for every year elapsed since organizing! Too much cannot be said in praise of this group's activity and their membership has now grown to a total of twenty-eight in the three years that they have functioned.

\* \* \*

We now come to what might be called the second stage of development of the orchestra. With the resignation of Mr. Marriott, several names of possible conductors were suggested to succeed him. In the early summer of 1935, each man was invited to attend a rehearsal and conduct it. The orchestra members wanted to select the one who seemed best fitted for the post, both from the standpoint of musicianship and from the standpoint of personality as well. Mr. Leonard DeMaria seemed by far the man for the position. He was a musician of many years' experience both as player, teacher, and conductor. The orchestra was fortunate in obtaining the services of so versatile a man.

Aiming always at perfection, his rehearsals are thorough and appreciated by the members for their fine attention to detail. His many years' experience with both professional and non-professional groups has equipped him with the technique needed to bring out the best, yet never losing sight of the fact that everyone present is there for the pleasure of accomplishment only, and not for financial profit.

Through all of the first five seasons of the organized life of the orchestra, rehearsals had been held at 'Turners' Hall but in the Fall of 1937 rehearsals were begun at the Kendrick Recreation Center on Ridge Avenue. A larger



hall was available and it was decided to be to the best interests of the orchestra to move to this new location.

After five successful seasons of three concerts each, the orchestra starts out upon its sixth season with the outlook very bright for the future. The list of patrons as shown on the first program of the sixth season totals 152, which is a growth of 122 names since the first concert in 1932. Membership now totals 57 instruments as compared with the 43 who played the first concert. In looking over the list of members it is interesting to note the many instances of relationship among the players—husband and wife, parent and child.

The music library was richly enhanced during the summer of 1937 through the purchase of music at very reasonable prices which had come on the market. The Women's Auxiliary contributed funds to aid in this purchase and the orchestra library was so well built up that sufficient material is now owned that further purchases to avoid program repetition should not be necessary for several years to come. This music consists of a wide variety of symphonic works, suites, overture, selections from standard musical productions and incidental numbers. Some are expensive foreign editions.

In bringing this narrative to a close, we would not be doing justice to the orchestra or the auxiliary if we did not stress the unusual sociability of both groups. There is a friendliness and good fellowship among the members which is so often lacking among such organizations. In both groups, the original officers are still in office with but one or two exceptions. The orchestra membership still is comprised mainly of the original names who played together many years ago. There have been a few sad losses through death which none may escape. A few players living outside of Roxborough have been invited to membership but it still is a Roxborough Orchestra guided by Roxborough men and it has become a prime asset in the cultural life of the community, which is its sole public aim. No financial gain is sought by its members, it is absolutely a non-professional organization

doing its bit for the community and getting a lot of fun out of the effort.

AUTHOR'S NOTE—The Official Seal reproduced hereon and also used on programs, is the work of Mr. Otto Hartman, percussion player of the orchestra. It was officially adopted in the Fall of 1934.



## THE NORTH LIGHT BOYS' CLUB

*(Organized 1936)*

On December 22, 1936, the boys of Roxborough, Wissahickon, and Manayunk had evidence of a real Santa Claus, when the efforts of Miss Anne Wright, principal of Wissahickon and Joel Cook Schools, and Captain Franklin Luckman, of the Thirteenth Police District, made possible the opening of the North Light Boys' Club in its first quarters on 4410 Main Street. These quarters were donated free of rent and heat by the McDowell Paper Mill.

Crowded and cramped as these quarters were, North Light built a sound foundation for its future work in the community. With the help of Roxborough-Manayunk Lions' Club, school teachers, the W. P. A., and many others a strong Boys' Club program was organized. The boys set to work with a will and fine spirit of cooperation to clean out their quarters and help organize a program. As time went on, the need for larger and more adequate quarters became evident, and with the closing of the Manayunk School as a school building, the Board of Education leased the building for the use of the Boys' Club.

On September 1, 1938, the North Light Boys' Club moved from Main Street to the Manayunk School at 175 Green Lane. It had hardly been a year and a half since Miss Wright visualized a place where the boys of the community could go to safely expend their leisure time and energy, a place where, amid wholesome surroundings, competent leadership would provide them with the things boys like to do.

From the humble start in quarters graciously supplied by the McDowell Paper Company, the

boys now have a large three-story, twelve-room building with a spacious yard annexed. A full-rounded program of games, rooms, and craft classes was organized through the cooperation of the Education and Recreation Division of the Works Progress Administration.

Having been accepted in the membership of the Boys' Clubs of America, Inc., the North Light Boys' Club now set about making more permanent their existence in the community. After a thorough study of the community and the program had been made, the organization was accepted into the Philadelphia Community Fund. With the maintenance of a year-round program being assured, the Board of Directors set about selecting a full-time Executive Director. On July 1, 1939, Mr. E. S. Ostberg was called from the Wilmington Boys' Club to become the first full-time Executive Director, and plans were set on foot to realize the dreams of the founders.

In the summer of 1939 an extensive alteration program was started. With the coming of the winter months, the boys entered their club to partake in the many activities already started. Chief among the alterations and the greatest delight to the boys was the opening of the gymnasium. Another major change was the organizing of the boys by age groups. Three game rooms were opened for the Junior, Intermediate and Senior groups, and craft classes were organized on the same basis. Classes were started in citizenship, linoleum block printing, instru-

mental music, glee clubs, shoe cobbling, arts, woodwork, beadwork, and leatherwork.

On April 30, 1940, the North Light Boys' Club and its Board of Directors realized its most cherished dream when, at a public sale in the schoolyard, the building was bought from the Board of Education and thereby became the permanent home for the boys of the community. With the purchase of the building, the Directors and boys alike can now go ahead with all planned alterations in the security that all such alterations and additions will be for a lasting benefit to all present boy members and that legion of boys that will throng its doors in the future.



#### THE KENDRICK RECREATION CENTER (Erected 1927)

The editor regrets that due to the illness of Mr. Hugo F. Endlich, Director of the Kendrick Recreation Center on Ridge Avenue between history of that institution is available for inclusion in this book.

It may be noted, however, that the Center, popularly referred to as "the Rec.", is becoming increasingly a Community Center. Practically all the meetings of the General Committee for the Two-hundred Fiftieth Anniversary were held here.



## OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The following accounts have been kindly supplied to us by the principals of our local schools. They tell a story of remarkable development and change since 1918.



### LEVERING SCHOOL

*(Original grant, 1771)*

Levering School is essentially the same organization today that it was in 1918. The philosophy of education has changed necessitating a change in procedures, but this difference is not peculiar to one school. Prior to the opening of the Roxborough High School in February, 1924, the enrollment was higher than today, at times reaching over fifteen hundred. A further decrease occurred when the new Shawmont School was built, for then the annexes of Levering, namely Manatawna, Roxborough, Andora, and Andora Annex were closed. On March 1, 1940, there were nine hundred on roll.

In 1929 the present building was erected to replace a brick structure and an old house, both of which, in addition to the Granite Building which is still in use, sheltered the children. The new school is on the site of the home of Captain Charles Thompson Jones. It was dedicated to the memory of William L. Levering, who had given the land for school purposes in 1771, the original deed for which grant is now in the school. The one lack in this beautiful building is an auditorium and we hope that at a not too distant future to supply this need.

Robert C. String, following the well-loved Miss Emma Thomas, became principal prior to 1918 and remained until 1924. Joseph H. Thomas followed in February, 1924 but died in July. He was succeeded in September by Frank Ross, who was principal until April, 1933. Since then Miss Ethel M. Coster has been principal of this school.

### DOBSON AND SHAWMONT SCHOOLS

*(First building, about 1812)*

The new James Dobson Public School was erected in 1929 on the site of the old Schuylkill building located at Umbria and Hermitage Streets, in the part of Manayunk spoken of in former years as the "blocks."

The old Schuylkill building was a stone structure with eight small classrooms separated by large movable glass sash partitions in the older part and four larger classrooms, two on each floor, separated by large sliding doors.

There were no indoor toilet and washroom facilities and the outer toilets were within ten or fifteen feet from the classroom windows. The schoolyard was very inadequate.

The new structure opened in September, 1930 and, dedicated soon thereafter, was named in memory of and in honor of James Dobson, a textile manufacturer in the Manayunk district. Mr. Dobson's philosophy of life and of education crystalized itself in the motto, "We learn by experience." This principle of learning is one of the cardinal facets of modern progressive education in the schools today.

The James Dobson school building is a three-story reinforced concrete fire-proof structure with a buff rough brick exterior. There are 21 regular classrooms, one large Kindergarten room and one clothing room. In the basement, there is a large recreation room, and an industrial arts room and a cafeteria room. A large auditorium with a seating capacity for 500 persons is an essential feature of the building. In addition to the facilities mentioned above, there are the nurse's room, the teachers' rest room, the teachers' dining room, the public office, the principal's private office, basement lavatories, and toilet facilities on each floor.

The building is heated by direct and indirect radiation and ventilated by the fan system, which drives hydrated air through vents in each classroom and drives out the vitiated air through another system of flues or vents.

The large windows in each classroom and the indirect electric lights installed in each room give the children the best lighting conditions that can be secured. A greater advance has been made to preserve the health and general welfare of the children in these modern, well-equipped, well-lighted and well-heated school buildings and in their sanitation, than has been made in any other direction.

The yard space is large compared with the one on the old site.

The present enrollment approximates 475 pupils, which includes the Kindergarten children, the grades one to seven, and a special class.

The Shawmont school building, located at Shawmont Avenue and Eva Streets, in Upper Roxborough, is practically the same type and size, and of the same structure and facilities as have been given in a description of the James Dobson building. The pupil enrollment approximates 450 and includes a kindergarten class and regular grades, one to eight B inclusive. It is set back about one square from the main line of traffic on Ridge Avenue. This school is ideally situated for the safety, peace and quiet of school children.

This new building replaced the old Andorra four-room structure just a stone's throw away. The latter is now being used by the Upper Roxborough Community Center. The Manatawna school building, located at Ridge and Manatawna Avenues, a two-room structure, was also brought into this consolidation of schools as well as the "Yellow Schoolhouse," a one-room building, located at East Shawmont Avenue and Wise's Mill Road. This building is said to be probably the oldest school structure in Philadelphia, erected, it is said, about 1812 and is still standing. Still another school building, known as the Roxborough School, a two-story, four-room structure, located at Parker and Ridge Avenues, was abandoned and razed when its pupils were transferred to the new Shawmont School.

Up to June 26, 1939, Miss Blanche Heidinger was the supervising principal of the Shawmont

School. Mr. Howard B. Gladfelter, principal of the James Dobson School, took charge of both the Shawmont and Dobson Schools on Sept. 8, 1939. These schools are now combined as one unite organization.

Coming back to the old Schuylkill School, it should be said that Miss Catharine Conway was the principal before it was annexed to the Manayunk School, located on Green Lane below Silverwood Street. For many years the headmaster of the Green Lane Grammar School for Boys was "Dad" Murphy, whom a large number of the older residents still hold in fond memory and in great respect. He was followed by Mr. Robert C. String, who was succeeded by Mr. Howard B. Gladfelter in 1910. Mr. Gladfelter soon after 1910 was in charge of the old Schuylkill School and the Jones school, located at Shurs Lane and Cresson Street, in addition to the Green Lane School. He was in charge of these three buildings almost twenty years. The Jones building, a two-story, eight-room stone structure, was razed while the Green Lane building is now used as a meeting place for the North Light Boys' Club.

Mr. Gladfelter has been the supervising principal of the James Dobson School since its opening in 1930 and now, as previously said, is principal of both the Dobson and Shawmont Schools.

The Roxborough-Manayunk community is to be congratulated that in the short period of slightly more than a decade, six old school buildings have been replaced by two modern structures that meet the health, physical and mental needs of the children of this particular area, most adequately.

It should be mentioned that Miss Joanna M. Lindsay, now retired, served the cause of public education in both the old Schuylkill and the Dobson Schools, for a half century of the most unselfish service. Miss Irene Schofield, now retired, also gave a lifetime of devoted service in unstinted measure to the children who enrolled in both schools. Miss Jeanette Forest, now deceased, brought her culture and refinement and teaching ability to the first grade boys





*St. John the Baptist R. C. High School*





and girls who attended classes in both buildings. Miss Irene Bernard, now retired, also taught classes in both buildings some twenty years and left her mark of refinement upon the lives of many children. Miss Sylvania Thornton, now retired, gave a lifetime of service to the children attending the Green Lane and James Dobson schools.

Miss Laura Hull, now deceased, was a teacher in the Green Lane School when "Dad" Murphy was the principal. Miss Mary Kurtz of Roxborough, now retired, was the charming kindergarten teacher at the Jones Annex for many years and gave untiring service to the cause of the education of early childhood.

We do have two fine school buildings in this area, but the moulding influence of the artist teachers are the ends and means most to be desired and most to be championed by those who sincerely have the welfare of the schools at heart.



### JOEL COOK AND WISSAHICKON SCHOOLS

The history of the Joel Cook School has been rather uneventful since 1918. The name had been changed from Fairview sometime before this date. About 1922 the Manayunk School was made an annex of the Joel Cook School. The Manayunk School was closed in 1938 and in 1939 the Cook School was joined with the Wissahickon School under the principalship of Miss Anne Wright.



### ROXBOROUGH SENIOR AND JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL (Opened 1924)

Among the many institutions in Roxborough, there is no one of which we can be more justly

proud than the Roxborough High School. Sixteen years ago, February, 1924, the school was opened.

The ground on which it stands had been procured July 19, 1906. It was the intention of the Board of Education to build an elementary school there, since Roxborough's population was growing northward.

But Roxborough needed a High School, so, largely through the influence of a civic group (the "Parents' Association") the contract for a High School building was let in June, 1922. While the building was in course of construction the plan was changed again, and Roxborough High School was made a six-year High School—the only one of its kind in the city; a Junior High School including grades 7, 8, 9, and a Senior High School including grades 10, 11 and 12. The school is under one principal and operates as a unit.

In February, 1924, the first faculty of thirteen men and eighteen women, was appointed. By the end of March the number was increased to thirty-four.

Mr. Leslie Seely was the first principal, but before the school was formally opened, he was made principal of the Germantown High School, and Mr. J. Elwood Calhoun was appointed principal February 11, 1924.

In September, 1927, Mr. Calhoun was transferred to the Gratz Senior High School and Mr. Edwin Y. Montanye came to Roxborough as principal.

In December, 1930, when Mr. Montanye was appointed principal of the new Olney High School, Dr. Theodore S. Rowland became principal at Roxborough. Unfortunately Dr. Rowland stayed just a year and three months, when he was appointed to the principalship of the Northeast High School. But Roxborough was happy to welcome as its new principal, on March 1, 1932, Mr. Price B. Engle. The school had been growing in numbers and in school spirit, and under Mr. Engle's leadership there has been a steady growth along many lines.

In the first class there were seventeen boys and twenty-six girls. This class was graduated

in June, 1927. Since then, each June and February, classes have gone out from the school, now numbering more than 1800 graduates.

In the faculty there are now 60 members, a counsellor, a school visitor, an office staff, and a school nurse and a doctor who give part time service.

The Parents' Association, the Alumni, the Mothers' Discussion Group have aided the growth of the school, while the P. O. S. of A. and each successive graduating class have helped

to beautify the school by worthwhile gifts. Roxborough has now one of the finest athletic fields in the city—the Westerman field—with playing fields for many kinds of sport and a field house to be named in honor of the late Benjamin A. Kline.

Roxborough is proud of the splendid achievements of many of its graduates, and proud, too, of the ideals it upholds, and the high standards of character and of scholarship it is maintaining among its students.



# CHURCHES AND RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

## IN

### ROXBOROUGH, MANAYUNK AND WISSAHICKON

*Edited by the REV. WILLIAM H. COOPER*

The following accounts have been furnished for the most part by the clergy of the community or by persons authorized by them. No attempt is made to give a complete religious history, but the events and developments of the last quarter century are indicated. In some instances changes in pastors during the time of preparation of this volume made it difficult for the Historical Sketch Committee to secure the information desired. While our intention has been to omit no church or religious group and to give fair consideration to all, we have had to be content with a brief mention where a fuller statement of facts did not reach us in time to be included. The various Christian Communions are mentioned in the historical order of their appearance in the community.



#### THE BAPTIST CHURCHES

##### THE ROXBOROUGH BAPTIST CHURCH (Organized 1789)

The Roxborough Baptist Church, Ridge Avenue opposite Lyceum Avenue, is the oldest church body with a continuous history in Roxborough, having celebrated last year in a fitting manner its Sesquicentennial Anniversary.

Its Sunday School is the oldest in Roxborough, having been organized in 1817 under the leadership of a supply pastor, the Rev. John C. Murphy. The present church building was opened for worship on November 24, 1870. The modern educational building was added at a cost of \$140,000 in 1925-1926. On July 15, 1938 a bolt of lightning in one of the severest electrical and windstorms of many years struck the stone base of the spire which had adorned

the church auditorium for about sixty years, a landmark for the surrounding country. It was necessary to demolish the steeple. The present stone tower was erected in its place.

On May 9, 1923, the Rev. J. Foster Wilcox was called to the pastorate of this church, succeeding Dr. Johnson Miner, deceased, who had served from September, 1917 to December, 1922. Dr. Wilcox is the present pastor, his term of service in Roxborough having been exceeded by only three other Protestant ministers now serving in the Twenty-first Ward.

During the present pastorate two young men have been ordained to the gospel ministry: Melvin M. Forney on February 24, 1939 and T. Dale Leavesly on March 10, 1939. Two other young men, John H. Blair and Ralph L. Mayberry, were ordained from this church prior to the coming of Dr. Wilcox.

The annual Good Friday Community Service of Roxborough has been held at this church since 1933, with seven or eight local pastors participating on each occasion. In 1940 the auditorium was crowded beyond capacity at this service.

The Roxborough Baptist Church is virtually the mother church of all the other white Baptist congregations in the community, by reason of the fact that it supplied the great majority of the constituent members of these younger churches at the time of their organization. The present membership of Roxborough Baptist is six hundred.

##### THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF MANAYUNK (Organized 1851)

This church is situated at Green Lane below Silverwood Street, with a parsonage at 197 Green Lane.

Its organization occurred April, 1851, when it was formed by forty-two members dismissed from the Roxborough Baptist Church.

The pastors since 1918 have been:

1918-19 .....A. K. Stocksbrand  
1920-24 .....Linwood R. Berry  
1925-29 .....G. Morton Walker  
1929-34 .....Fred R. McArthur  
1935-40 .....Glenn H. Asquith

On April 1, 1925 the Mount Vernon Baptist Church of Umbria Street merged with First Baptist.

Intensive celebrations of the 75th anniversary (1926) and the 85th anniversary (1936) were observed.

Mr. Joseph Miles, the author of this book, was a regular attendant and member of this church, and Secretary of the Bible School.

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#### THE MANATAWNA BAPTIST CHURCH (Organized 1872)

The Manatawna Baptist Church, situated at 8711 Ridge Avenue, occupies, like the Episcopal Cathedral, the highest ground in the city of Philadelphia.

The Sunday School was organized on July 14, 1867, in Mechanics' Hall, with Joseph Peterman as Superintendent. Rev. David Spencer preached every other Sunday.

The Manatawna Baptist Church was organized May 14, 1872 with 62 members, and Rev. William Crowley was elected pastor. During the time since organization we have had the following pastors:

J. Alex. Clyde	William S. Crowley
Daniel Lewis	James A. Rainey
A. A. Nellis	William B. Tolan
John Wilder	John J. Davies
John B. Stewart	Henry Brey
C. Roy Angell	G. M. B. Clauser
C. H. Moorhouse	

In 1872 Rev. David Spencer secured from Alfred Hull a lot on the highest ground in Philadelphia for \$1000 for a church building.

The total cost of the church building was \$8750.23. The first officers were William S. Crowley, Pastor; William Dixon, Church Clerk; S. B. Linton, Treasurer. Rev. A. J. Ibbotson was pastor until April 1, 1939.

Rev. Harry C. Geckle, D.D., is the present pastor, called April 9, 1939. Present Deacons are Joseph Ernshaw, Melvin Marple and John Goshen. Supt. of Finances, Mrs. Minnie Dewees; Treasurer, Thomas Dixon; Clerk, Griffith Yarnall; Trustees, Melvin Marple, Thomas Dixon, Griffith Yarnall, Joseph Ernshaw, George Rohrback, Herbert Hart.

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#### WISSAHICKON BAPTIST CHURCH (Organized 1884)

The Wissahickon Baptist Church began as a Mission founded by Frank J. Cornman and fostered by him until his early death in 1877. The mission was then cared for by the Rev. James W. Willmarth of the Roxborough Baptist Church. In June, 1884, fifty-six members of the Roxborough Church with others were organized into the Wissahickon Baptist Church.

The church is situated on Terrace Street at the corner of Dawson Street. Its present pastor, the Rev. Harvey Warner, came in 1940 and followed the Rev. David F. Bartine. Mr. Bartine was preceded by the Rev. J. Norman Martin, who resigned September, 1934, after a pastorate of six years.

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#### THE GALILEE BAPTIST CHURCH (COLORED) (Organized 1896)

The only congregation of colored people in the Twenty-first Ward is the Galilee Baptist Church at the corner of Roxborough Avenue and Mitchell Street. The church was organized in 1896 and was incorporated on January 8, 1900. For twelve years thereafter it was served by the Rev. Clarence Parrish, under whose leadership the present building was erected.

The second pastor, Dr. Hall, labored from 1913 to June, 1923, and succeeded in having the



mortgage paid off and all indebtedness removed. The Rev. Mr. Harper came July 11, 1923 and served until August, 1931. Just prior to his coming, while the church was as yet without a pastor, the parsonage at 457 Roxborough Avenue was purchased.

Following Mr. Harper came the Rev. Mr. Wiggins, March 2, 1932, and remained until July 28, 1935. The present pastor, the Rev. Frank B. Mitchell, came in October, 1935. During his time the church has been renovated.



## THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCHES

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### THE FOURTH REFORMED CHURCH (Organized 1827)

The Fourth Reformed Church at Manayunk and Monastery Avenues is the second oldest in the community and was the first church to be established in the Village of Manayunk, thirteen years before the latter was incorporated as a borough.

The church began as a Sunday School which was gathered by a certain Mr. Glandin in September, 1827 and met in the front room of Mrs. Isaac Matson's home in Keating's Front Row (now Main Street below Rector).

The congregational life of the church began with the arrival of the Rev. Cornelius Van Cleef in December, 1826. The corner stone of the first building (on Cotton Street) was laid in June, 1827, and the congregation was incorporated September 18, 1827, with the title, "The First Reformed Dutch Church of Manayunk and Flat Rock, Roxborough Township, Philadelphia County."

The present name, "The Fourth Reformed Church of Philadelphia," was given to the congregation in the early part of 1872.

The cornerstone of the present church building was laid November 17, 1900, during the pastorate of the Rev. Patrick J. Kain, D.D. (1895-1909). The old church on Cotton Street, Manayunk, was sold to the Roman Catholics

and became the home of the Polish congregation of St. Josaphat. Fourth Reformed celebrated its Centennial May 8-15, 1927.

The pastors since 1918 have been:

The Rev. Frank S. Fry (1918-1928)

The Rev. Richard P. Mallery (1929-1939)

The Rev. Cornelius Muyskens (1939- )

In 1931 the Hundredth Anniversary of Roxborough's Sunday School Parades was observed and a bronze tablet was placed by the twenty-four Sunday Schools of the Ward on the lawn in front of this church in order to honor its member, Samuel Lawson, who had originated the Fourth of July picnics for the Sunday School of the Fourth Reformed Church in 1831. Other Sunday Schools soon followed his example and the parade and picnic celebrations gradually evolved.

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### THE TALMAGE REFORMED CHURCH (Organized 1889)

The Talmage Reformed Church, located at Pechin and Rector Streets, is one of only four churches of this denomination, (The Reformed Church of America), now existing in Philadelphia.

In 1888 Miss Letitia Talmage started a little Sunday School Class in her home on Lyceum Avenue, which grew rapidly, and resulted in the organization of the church in 1889. It was named Talmage, in honor of her father, the Rev. Peter Stryker Talmage, one of the early pastors of the old Fourth Reformed Church in Manayunk. In December 1935 a bronze tablet was put in the church in honor of her memory.

During its fifty-one years the church has steadily grown and flourished. During its history it has had seven different Pastors. The last two who served were Rev. William R. Rearick from 1909 to 1922, and Rev. M. G. Gosselink from 1923 to 1937.

On September 22, 1939, our new Pastor, Rev. Martin Hoeksema, was installed,—since which time the church has taken on new life and renewed energy. Though a small church it is a

live church—and a church without a single debt. It has a vigorous Sunday School, a splendid Men's Bible Class, a very active Christian Endeavor Society, and the largest King's Daughters Circle in Philadelphia—and a most promising outlook for the future.



## THE METHODIST CHURCHES

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### MT. ZION METHODIST CHURCH

*(Organized 1827)*

This church is no longer in existence, having united with the Central Methodist Church in 1925 to form the First Methodist Church of Roxborough. Mt. Zion was organized in the fall of 1827 in the school house at 4204-6 Main Street, Manayunk, from which the people of the Reformed Church had just moved into their partly finished new church building on Cotton Street. The Rev. H. G. King was the first pastor of Mt. Zion Church. The first church building was erected on Levering Street and dedicated November 20, 1831. The congregation was incorporated in 1840 with 240 members. A new building was erected on Green Lane at the corner of Carson Street and dedicated in 1842. In 1889 the Rev. H. R. Robinson reported 461 members. After this year the membership experienced a decline in numbers with the movement of population from Manayunk to Roxborough, and on June 21, 1925 the union with Central Church was consummated.

The last pastor of Mt. Zion was the Rev. C. S. Mervine who served it in 1918-1922 and again in 1925. Rev. Mr. Mervine, now retired, is the oldest clergyman resident in the community and has been an honored member of the Clergy Club from its inception nearly a quarter of a century ago.

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### EBENEZER METHODIST CHURCH

*(Organized 1847)*

This congregation was organized in Temperance Hall, Manayunk, by the Rev. James Smith

in the spring of 1847, with a group of members from Mt. Zion Church.

The first Ebenezer Church was erected upon part of the site of the present structure at Gay and Mansion Streets and was dedicated in 1848. The present large edifice was dedicated in February, 1901. The present Church School building was opened on June 18, 1899.

In 1927, the interiors of the Church and Sunday School were renovated at a cost of eight thousand dollars and re-dedicated in November of that year.

This year the church held a service of Re-opening on Sunday, May 5, after extensive interior renovation of the church auditorium and Sunday School rooms. The improvements were made possible by members of the church as a ninety-third birthday gift. Throughout its long history Ebenezer has been characterized by the remarkable loyalty of its people.

The present pastor, the Rev. Bickley Burns Wilgus has served since 1936. His predecessor, the Rev. Eugene B. Harshberger served from 1934-1936, following the Rev. David W. Siegrist and the Rev. Elias B. Baker.

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### RIDGE AVENUE METHODIST CHURCH

*(Organized 1847)*

On August 15, 1847 at the request of several persons living in the neighborhood of Ridge and Shawmont Avenues, a service was conducted in the little yellow schoolhouse at the corner of Shawmont Avenue and Wise's Mill Road. The Rev. George Heacock, then a local preacher, gave the first sermon.

For a number of years the infant mission drifted in turn to the care of the Methodist churches at Germantown, Manayunk, Conshohocken and East Falls.

In 1858, the Rev. Wesley C. Best, then pastor of Mt. Zion Methodist Church of Manayunk held protracted meetings and the membership was increased from seven to fifty-six and continued to grow and to prosper, so that the Little Yellow Schoolhouse was no longer adequate.



A lot was purchased in 1859 on Ridge Avenue above Shawmont Avenue and in 1860 a one-story building was erected. It is said on good authority, that Peter Cartright, one of the famous circuit riding parsons, laid the corner stone.

A constitution was drawn up on May 22, 1859 and the church was incorporated August 19, 1862. In 1864 the Rev. Silas B. Best was appointed pastor and during his pastorate the church was freed from debt.

In 1867, a parsonage was erected at the corner of Ridge and Shawmont Avenues, a gift from Mr. William C. Hamilton.

The Sunday School at Ridge Avenue Methodist was organized by Mr. Frank W. Lockwood and, under his capable leadership it grew in numbers and usefulness. The school was graded as to senior, intermediate, primary and infant departments. Mr. Lockwood retired in 1921, having served as superintendent for fifty years. He was followed by Mr. Thomas Morrow and Mr. Harry Reiter, both of these men served short terms and were followed by Mr. Harry D. Evans. Mr. Evans served faithfully for twenty years and during his occupation as superintendent many changes were made, the school was re-graded and a teachers training class formed.

During the pastorate of the Rev. Amos D. Geist, 1902 to 1907, the remodeling of the church auditorium was completed and some beautiful stained glass windows were installed. They are still famous throughout the city. They represent three incidents in the life of Christ. "Christ the Good Shepherd," Christ Knocking at the Door," and "Christ Blessing Little Children."

The years between 1910 and 1922 passed smoothly under such preachers as the Rev. C. M. Haddaway, Rev. Alfred Heebner, who passed away while serving here; the Rev. F. W. Z. Barrett and Rev. Wm. May also served the pastorate.

In 1922 Rev. Wm. Beyer came to the church and many new improvements were added to the church during his stay. Rev. Mr. Beyer a quiet, godly man led many to the altar by his sincere and convincing presentation of the gospel.

Rev. L. S. Ewing served from 1926 to 1929. While Rev. Ewing served the church was remodeled and extensive changes made inside and outside the church. A very fine Austin organ was installed. The total cost of improvements was about \$18,000.00

Rev. John C. Petre followed the Rev. Mr. Ewing in 1929 and in the few months he served the church made many friends. He was a very lovable personality and was often likened to "That other Disciple."

Rev. O. C. Ketels, then on leave of absence from active church duty, came to complete Rev. Mr. Petre's year and at its close he was so well liked, that at the following conference in 1930 he was asked to remain. Rev. Ketels and family moved into the parsonage and made many friends and during his stay many were added to the church membership. He was an artist of great ability and his informal talks on sacred art were famous. During the ministry of Rev. Ketels, Scout Troop No. 311, Boy Scouts of America, was organized under the leadership of Mr. Phillip Brett.

Rev. George W. Babcock occupied the pulpit at Ridge Avenue Methodist for one year after Rev. Mr. Ketels, and the following conference retired from active work.

In the spring of 1934 Rev. Wm. A. MacLachlan was appointed. Rev. Mr. MacLachlan was a young man of great energy and a capacity for hard work. He was an ardent worker among young people and during his pastorate here the Epworth League reached a maximum membership and many young people were added to the church roll.

During 1934 the parsonage was renovated and an all-electric kitchen, the pride of the Ladies' Aid, was completed. Soon after a system of indirect lighting was installed in the church.

Rev. E. D. Decker followed in 1938. Rev. Mr. Decker, a man of fine spiritual quality, served for two years, then retired from the conference after forty-eight years spent in the ministry of the gospel.

The present pastor is Rev. C. Lyle Thomas. He is one of the youngest ministers to serve

the pastorate at Ridge Avenue. A young man of great promise. In the short time he has been here he has drawn many to the church.

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#### THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH

(Organized as *Central Methodist*, 1870;  
*Reorganized*, 1925)

Central Methodist Church began as a Sunday School in a room over a shoe store at the southwest corner of Green Lane and Ridge Avenue, February 27, 1870. Previous to this the Sunday School had met for a number of weeks in private homes. A lot was purchased on Green Lane and the first floor of the church building was occupied November 19, 1871. The second story was completed and dedicated March 26, 1876. The parsonage was begun in September, 1877.

In 1901 the church building was enlarged and in 1910 a one-story extension was added. The property was renovated in 1915 at a cost of \$12,500.

In June, 1925, by a union with the old Mt. Zion Church of Manayunk, Central Church was reorganized under a new name, "The First Methodist Episcopal Church of Roxborough."

Dr. S. M. Vernon was the influential pastor of Central Church in the years 1910-1918. He was succeeded by the Rev. W. G. Tyson (1919-1922) and the Rev. J. C. Petre (1923-1925). Dr. F. D. Lawrence served from 1926-1932, and was the pastor of First Church.

Since 1932 the pastors of the First Church have been:

1932-1937 .... Samuel McWilliams, D.D.  
1937-1939 ..... Michael F. Davis  
1939- ..... Robert C. Coats

In 1930 the present Church School was erected at a cost of \$90,000. It is one of the most modern of such buildings in the Conference. In 1940 a set of electronic church chimes was installed in memory of Mr. John Wilde and given by Dr. and Mrs. Linton Turner. These chimes were dedicated March 10, 1940.

The present enrolled membership of the

church is 860, of whom 700 are resident and active.

For a number of years up to and including 1937 the Church School building of First Church housed a flourishing community Daily Vacation Church School with pupils attending from almost every church in Roxborough and Manayunk, under interdenominational auspices. For a number of years, Roxborough's World Day of Prayer has also been held in this church.

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#### THE WISSAHICKON METHODIST CHURCH

(Organized 1882)

Wissahickon Methodist Church, situated at Terrace and Salignac Streets, was incorporated April 1, 1882. The cornerstone of the present church edifice, one of the most imposing in the community, was laid April 14, 1883. The building was enlarged in 1902.

The pastors since 1930 have been:

1930-1933 ..... Rev. W. J. Bawden  
1933-1934 ..... Rev. H. R. Johnson  
1934-1940 ..... Rev. J. B. Mackay, D.D.  
1940- ..... Rev. F. P. Davis

The late Dr. James Bruce Mackay served the church after he had already passed his three score years and ten, yet his was the longest pastorate in the history of the parish. He died in February, 1940, just before being able to retire. Dr. Mackay was greatly beloved in the church and the community.

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#### EMMANUEL METHODIST CHURCH

(Organized 1891)

Emmanuel Church at Silverwood and Gates Streets is a daughter congregation of Ebenezer Church, Manayunk. The first move came through a committee of Ebenezer members formed on May 24, 1888. This group organized a Sunday School which met in what is now the G. A. R. Hall on Fountain Street near Ridge Avenue, on May 27, 1888. On October 27, 1889, a lot for a church building was purchased



at the present site. On February 22, 1891, they asked the Conference for a pastor and the "Emmanuel Methodist Episcopal Church of Roxborough" came into existence. The Rev. G. W. Graff was the first pastor in charge and the Rev. James H. Robinson was the first pastor of the church after it was made a separate charge. The chapel was dedicated just prior to this, in September, 1890. An annex of two rooms was added late in 1893. On August 7, 1891, thirty-seven members from Ebenezer Church were constituted charter members of Emmanuel.

On August 27, 1910, ground was broken for a new church building. On June 4, 1911, the church, seating 400, was completed. Nine years later (June, 1920) the church was cleared of all debt.

The stone parsonage was erected under the leadership of the Rev. George A. Laughead (1926-1931) at an approximate cost of \$26,000. Under Pastor Anderman (1935-1940) the mortgage indebtedness was reduced by one-half.

The pastors since 1918 have been:

1918-1922	....Rev. George B. Burnwood
1922-1923	.....Rev. Charles A. Benjamin
1923-1925	.....Rev. A. C. F. Ottey
1926-1931	....Rev. George A. Laughead
1931-1932	.....Rev. Harry D. Robinson
1932-1935	.....Rev. Alvin L. Cooper
1935-1940	..Rev. William H. Anderman
1940-1947	.....Rev. A. B. Goudie



## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES

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### THE CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST (Organized 1831)

Before there was any Catholic Church in this community, Mass was celebrated as early as 1828 in the home of Jerome Keating. This house later became the convent and occupied the ground where St. John's Church now stands. The congregation which met in the house grew until it was necessary to meet in the Dutch

Reformed Church. The first Catholic church building, erected in 1831, was very small. The first resident pastor was the Rev. Thomas Gegal. Under the Rev. David Mulholland, pastor from 1837 to 1861, the first school was opened in the basement of the enlarged church. A parochial school building was completed in 1878, under the pastorate of the Rev. Francis O'Connor.

The present handsome church edifice, made possible by the large bequest of a parishioner, Bernard McCane, was begun in September, 1886, and solemnly dedicated April 1, 1894, although the spires and interior decoration remained then uncompleted. With its seating capacity of 1400 and room for 1100 more in the galleries, and with its frontage of 92 feet and depth of 187 feet, it was at the time of its erection one of the most imposing parish churches in Philadelphia. The tower, 200 feet in height, has been a landmark since its erection, and is of unusual architectural beauty.

Since 1918 the following important events in the history of the parish may be cited:

November 2, 1919—A solemn military Mass was celebrated in St. John's for the heroid dead of the World War. Rev. Joseph L. N. Wolfe, former chaplain of the 109th Infantry, preached the sermon. The celebrant of the Mass was Rt. Rev. Monsignor Eugene Murphy. The Rt. Rev. John J. Bonner was deacon, and the Rev. Michael A. Bennett, subdeacon.

August 8, 1921—St. John's parochial school was destroyed by fire. The basement of the Church was converted into temporary classrooms and used for teaching purposes until the school was rebuilt and reopened on Easter Monday, April 17, 1922.

In 1921 Monsignor Murphy laid plans for a boys' high school before the people. This led to the purchase of the Schofield Mansion at Pechin and Seville Streets, for use as a secondary school for the boys of the parish. In 1922 the Brothers of Mary took their posts as faculty members of the boys' school, and have since continued doing splendid work in training the young men of the parish. Brother George Sig-

worth, S.M., heads the school. In September, 1922 the new high school was dedicated. This ceremony was presided over by His Eminence, Dennis Cardinal Dougherty.

In 1923 the high school was accredited by the Department of Public Instruction at Harrisburg, the boys' department being under the direction of the Brothers of Mary, and the girls' under the guidance of the Sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

The autumn of 1927 saw the organization of a Boys' Band. Mr. Lucien Cailliet, a member of the Philadelphia Orchestra, was the capable director. The next year, 1928, an orchestra was formed by the girls' department of the high school, under Mr. Cailliet's direction.

In 1931 St. John's celebrated the hundredth anniversary of its foundation. His Eminence the Cardinal presided at the Solemn Mass, and Rev. James T. Higgins delivered an inspiring address. The Holy Father Pope Pius XI sent his Apostolic Benediction to the clergy and the people.

In December, 1933 the boys' high school was burned, but was rebuilt and ready for use in March, 1934.

May 1, 1938—The Rt. Rev. Monsignor Eugene Murphy went to his eternal reward after a life of zealous and fruitful labor as a priest, educator, and civic leader. He had been forty-seven years at St. John's, including six years as a curate.

May 13, 1938—Rev. John Joseph McKenna, former National Secretary of the Propagation of the Faith Society, was appointed rector of this parish. Father McKenna was welcomed by the children and the people, who, though saddened at the loss of their beloved Monsignor, were glad to extend a welcome to his worthy successor.

In May, 1938 Rev. John J. McKenna was named Diocesan Director of the Holy Name Society. A Holy Name rally was held in St. John the Baptist Parish Hall in October of the same year.

Among the priests who served the parish so well in recent years, but who have since been

transferred, are: Rev. P. H. McGinnis, Rev. Thomas W. Stapleton, Rev. Joseph L. Curran, Rev. Hubert Cartright, and Rev. Connell Clinton.

April 30, 1939—A monument to the memory of the late rector of St. John's, Monsignor Eugene Murphy, was erected by funds donated by the people of the parish and was blessed at a ceremony attended by a great concourse of people, by the present pastor, Rev. John J. McKenna.

The parish is now ably administered by Rev. John J. McKenna, assisted by Rev. James T. McBride, Rev. Ignatius C. Reynolds, and Rev. James F. Connor.

In 1939 there were 912 boys and girls in the elementary grades of the parochial school. The membership of the parish is approximately six thousand souls.

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#### THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

*(Organized 1849)*

This second oldest of the Catholic churches in the community has ministered for more than ninety years to the German speaking Catholic constituency. Before St. Mary's Church was established, the German families in Manayunk heard Mass at St. John the Baptist's and went to confession at Holy Trinity at Sixth and Spruce Streets. From 1843 to 1849 a Redemptorist Father came once a month to St. John's to hear confessions in German and to preach German sermons.

In 1849 Bishop Kenrick permitted the erection of a church building for the German colony. Ground was purchased in Oak Street (now Conarro Street) and the church was dedicated January 1, 1850. The first pastor was the Rev. S. R. Etthofer, who remained one year.

There were frequent changes in pastors thereafter until the coming of the Rev. Rudolph Kuenzer, who remained from 1862 to 1871. He was the founder of the parochial school built opposite to the church in 1867.



The Rev. F. J. Matersteck followed and remained more than twice as long as Father Kuenzer. He made extensive improvements in the church in 1881, and in 1892 built an addition to the parochial school, doubling its capacity.

The present pastor, the Rev. Henry A. Gantert, is Father Matersteck's successor, having come to the parish as curate in 1893. Thus his has been the longest pastorate that St. Mary's has enjoyed, covering fully half of its history. On March 15, 1940, Father Gantert celebrated his Golden Jubilee in the priesthood. Among those who sent greetings to him were his friends in the Bethanian German Lutheran Church of Roxborough.

During Father Gantert's pastorate a new parochial school was built in 1907, at a cost of \$54,000, with \$6,000 additional for furnishings. In 1939 the enrollment in the parochial school was nearly 450.

Because of the fact that St. Mary's ministers to a foreign language group, there are no well-defined parish boundaries. While most of the parishioners are German or of German descent, the services are attended also by Hungarians, Austrians, Magyars, Hollanders, and French, most of whom are able to understand and speak a little German. About half of the preaching is now done in English.

The following priests have been Father Gantert's assistants in recent years:

1918-1927	.. The Rev. Frederick A. Fasig
1927-1928	..... The Rev. Francis Walter
1928-1931	. The Rev. William Bruckmann
1931-1934	... The Rev. Charles Ruffenach
1934-1939	..... The Rev. John G. Engler
1939-	The Rev. William F. Hammeke

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#### THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY FAMILY

*(Organized 1885)*

In the summer of 1881 Archbishop Wood of Philadelphia selected and purchased the ground

on which the Church of the Holy Family was to be built, on Hermitage Street, opposite Wilde Street. This site, then known as Mount Vernon, is said to be the most elevated of any Catholic pastoral residence in the city. The present rectory, for anyone who will take the trouble to climb its many steps, commands a most inspiring view of both banks of the Schuylkill River at Manayunk and the intervening bridges.

The first pastor was the Rev. Michael C. McEnroe, who lived in the small old-fashioned house on the property. He was appointed to organize the parish January 20, 1885. In April of that year he began the erection of a frame chapel, which, with unplastered walls, was dedicated the first Sunday in May. Singers from St. John's and St. Mary's, Manayunk, formed a part of the choir at this humble commencement. In 1893 Father McEnroe enlarged his residence, and by 1895 he had an assistant for the growing congregation. The present church building was built in 1897.

Among the pastors who have served at Holy Family, none is better or more gratefully remembered today than the Rev. William Grace (1916-1935).

Almost immediately, in 1917, he succeeded in raising the sum of \$15,000 in a financial campaign for the work of the parish. Through his efforts not only was the debt considerably reduced, but the present commodious rectory was built in 1922, while the old rectory was renovated as a convent. In 1927-1928 the church was entirely renovated, and on November 18, 1928, in the presence of Cardinal Dougherty, a service of Solemn Reopening was held. Father Grace died in April, 1935, while still in his early sixties. A quiet but an efficient worker, he had given of his best for the parish.

In May, 1935, the Rev. Joseph E. Marley came as pastor, his previous place of service being the Church of St. Philomena, Lansdowne. He is assisted by the Rev. William Haley, appointed to Holy Family in June, 1936, and the Rev. Raphael O'Brien, appointed in October, 1938.

In 1939 there were 432 children in the parochial school, taught by eleven Sisters, with

Mother John Francis as Superior. The present school building was erected in 1911.

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THE CHURCH OF ST. JOSAPHAT  
(Organized 1898)

As St. Mary's has served the German-speaking element among Catholics for nearly a century, so St. Josaphat's has served the immigrants from Poland and their children for nearly half a century. The first baptism is recorded for the year 1898. Curiously enough the church building is much older than the congregation, being the old Dutch Reformed Church, sold to the Polish Catholics by the people of the Fourth Reformed Church in the spring of 1899, for about \$25,000.

The present pastor, the Rev. L. A. Stachowicz, has served since 1920. During his time an addition was built to the parochial school (1927). The school was built in 1913. Its enrollment of 650 is second to that of St. John the Baptist among the Catholic churches in our community. The children are taught by the Bernardine Sisters, headed by Mother Narcissa. In 1939 a Junior High School was organized, and is now completing its first academic year. Quite recently the church has been painted inside and out. The Rev. Paul A. Lambarski is curate since June, 1939, and the Rev. John A. Mroszka since January, 1940.

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THE CHURCH OF ST. LUCY  
(Organized 1927)

St. Lucy's is the most recently organized of the five Catholic parishes in our midst. At the end of 1926 the church property of the old Mt. Zion Methodist Episcopal Church was secured and altered for use by an Italian Catholic constituency. The Rev. Bartolo Fiorioli is pastor, ministering to 190 Italian families in Manayunk and to others in West Manayunk. There is no parochial school, the children attending the schools at St. John's, St. Mary's, and Holy Family, and the public schools.

THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL  
CHURCHES

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ST. DAVID'S CHURCH, MANAYUNK  
(Organized 1831)

The Episcopalians entered Manayunk in the same year as the Roman Catholics. In December, 1831, St. David's Church was organized. The Missionary in charge was the Rev. Robert Davis. He was followed in turn by two other missionary pastors until September, 1835, when the first rector, the Rev. Frederick Freeman, took charge.

The cornerstone of the first church building, which stood on the present site on Dupont Street, was laid in August, 1832. In 1857 this building was enlarged and rededicated. In 1879 it was destroyed by fire.

The cornerstone of the present church structure was promptly laid in May, 1880, and the building was consecrated in 1881. Its beautiful tower remains a landmark in the heart of old Manayunk today and is particularly attractive as one approaches it at the head of Baker Street.

Among the more recent rectors have been the Rev. Francis W. Barnett (December, 1918-September, 1922) and the Rev. J. Ogle Warfield, D.D. (from February, 1923, to the present).

The leading lay benefactor since the turn of the century was Mr. Orlando Crease, whose widow survives him and is a resident of Germantown.

St. David's parish continues steadily active in a greatly changed neighborhood under the experienced leadership of Dr. Warfield.

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ST. TIMOTHY'S CHURCH, ROXBOROUGH  
(Organized 1859)

In November, 1859 the first session of St. Timothy's Sunday School was held in the lodge house of Mr. D. Rodney King, on the east side of Ridge Avenue just below Manayunk Avenue, Wissahickon. The first church service was held



April 22, 1860 in the "Old Poor House" at the junction of Righter Street and Ridge Avenue. The Rev. J. W. Claxton, rector of St. David's, Manayunk, officiated. In this same year a parish was formed, a charter applied for, and the first rector, the Rev. John L. McKim began his work October 21.

The cornerstone of the church at Ridge Avenue and Jamestown Avenue was laid by Bishop Alonzo Potter on July 18, 1862 and the church was consecrated by Bishop Stevens on February 14, 1863.

The tower of the church was built in 1871, the gift of Mr. J. V. Merrick. The parish building was erected in 1874 and at the same time the church was enlarged. The Vested Male Choir, introduced in 1876, was one of the first in this country.

A second enlargement of the church was made in 1885, connecting it with the parish building. The marble altar dates from 1892 and the chimes from 1897.

The property was extended by purchase north to Pensdale Street in 1920. The new rectory was built in 1924. Extensive renovation and re-decoration of the church and parish house occurred in 1931.

The present rector, the Rev. Edmund B. Wood, has served since 1934. In his time the east wall of the church was built, the churchyard planted and all buildings were put into good order.

In Advent 1939 and Epiphany 1940, St. Timothy's celebrated its eightieth anniversary.

The Rev. Henry B. Gorgas has served recently as assistant.

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ST. ALBAN'S CHURCH, ROXBOROUGH  
(Organized 1859)

In the same year that St. Timothy's Sunday School began to meet in Wissahickon, a group of younger children was gathered as a Primary Department in the home of Mr. Alfred Crease far up on the Ridge, and a little group of members of St. David's organized as St. Alban's Parish (originally as St. Peter's in 1858) and

met in a store on the Ridge above Fairthorne Avenue. In 1861 the present church was built on Fairthorne Avenue and the rectory was constructed at the corner of Ridge Avenue and Fairthorne about twenty years later. The first unit of the parish house dates from about 1862. It was enlarged in 1885 and again in 1935.

One of the longest ministries on record in the community was that of the Rev. Charles S. Lyons, who served St. Alban's, his only parish, for about forty years, from 1888 to 1927. He was followed by the Rev. Edgar Campbell, who had one of the shortest ministries here, dying suddenly in 1929 by infection from a carbuncle, after less than a year of service. In spite of being in Roxborough so brief a time he recommended himself as a friendly, thoughtful minister of Christ, beyond as well as within the parish.

The present rector, the Rev. N. Herbert Caley, came in 1930. In addition to his ministerial calling, Mr. Caley has followed musical composition as an education.

The interior of the church was remodeled in 1930. Between 1930 and 1940 the parish has had a very substantial growth.

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ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH, WISSAHICKON  
(Organized 1886)

This church traces its origin back to St. David's, of which it was a mission, initiated in 1871 by the Rev. F. H. Bushnell. In June, 1876, the first service was held in the new chapel on Terrace Street. St. Stephen's was organized as an independent parish late in 1886. The parish building was begun two years later.

During the epidemic of influenza in the autumn of 1918 the parish hall was turned into an emergency hospital under the supervision of Dr. Simcox. Dr. Krusen wrote a letter complimenting the parish on this hospital and saying it was the best run emergency hospital in the city.

In 1936 the parish, having been hard hit financially by the depression, temporarily assumed a mission status. Bishop Taitt appointed the Rev. Carroll M. Bates priest-in-charge.

On November 27, 1936, St. Stephen's celebrated its fiftieth anniversary.

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THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF CHRIST OF THE  
PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL DIOCESE  
OF PENNSYLVANIA  
8630 Ridge Avenue, Roxborough  
(Incorporated 1920)

At an informal meeting at "Leighton Place," Overbrook, June 12, 1913, the following gentlemen pledged themselves to give careful consideration to the proposal to form a Cathedral Foundation for the Diocese of Pennsylvania: Rt. Rev. Philip M. Rhinelander, George Wharton Pepper, John J. Collier, Samuel F. Houston, Eli Kirk Price, Frank H. Moss, Wm. Ellis Scull. The latter acted as secretary and on the previous February, 1913 had conferred with Bishop Rhinelander and secured his approval of the project.

Two more meetings were held in 1913 and more were interested, including, among others, Louis B. Runk, J. Vaugan Merrick and Mrs. G. W. C. Drexel.

Meetings were held in 1915, at which application for a charter was discussed and Eli Kirk Price was requested to draw up a form of Charter.

On November 8, 1916 the Commissioners of Fairmount Park, by resolution, allotted a site with Parkway boundaries from Twenty-second Street to the Crescent, between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Parkway Drive.

At the Cathedral Committee meeting on April 29, 1917, it was thought advisable to begin Sunday afternoon services on the proposed Cathedral site, beginning Trinity Sunday, June 3, 1917. The Park Commission had granted the permission to hold services on May 8, 1917 and through the summer. Frank H. Longshore, Choirmaster, and Edmund B. McCarthy and the

Brotherhood of Saint Andrew were responsible for the conduct of these services.

The first endowment fund gift was from a Miss Mary E. Dewees, a trained nurse, in the form of a \$50.00 Liberty Bond, which was a part of her savings.

On January 17, 1921, the Diocesan Church of St. Mary, at Broad and South Streets (formerly the Church of the Ascension) was transferred to Chapter of the Cathedral Church of Christ.

The Charter for the Cathedral Church of Christ was applied for November 5, 1919 and was recorded on December 22, 1920.

In 1924, the Rt. Rev. Thomas J. Garland became Bishop, Bishop Rhinelander having resigned the previous year.

Bishop Garland was very much interested in the Cathedral project and personally selected the present site on Ridge Avenue, Upper Roxborough, in 1927. Then things began to happen. The site was both sides of Manatawna Avenue, east of Hagy's Mill Road and west of Ridge Avenue and comprised 100 acres. Most of the site is level ground, one point is 414 feet above sea level.

Three large open-air services were held near Manatawna Avenue on the former Callahan property during 1927. The second Diocesan Day was held on June 9, 1938. The third was held June 22, 1929. The services were conducted under the oversight of Bishop Garland.

There was no service during 1930, Bishop Garland being on a world tour. He died on March 1, 1931.

During these years plans were made to carry on the work of preparation and on June, 1932 ground was broken for Saint Mary's Chapel, the first unit of the Cathedral.

Bishop Francis Marion Taitt broke ground with a new Philadelphia-made spade at the location of the future Altar of the Chapel. This was 375 feet due west of the center of the proposed Cathedral Circle at Ridge, Henry and Cathedral Avenues.

Frank R. Watson and Messrs. Edkins and Thompson are the architects of St. Mary's





*Cathedral Church of Christ of the Protestant Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania*





Chapel, that part of the Cathedral now built. Samuel F. Houston made a very interesting address on the view and commanding position. Congressman Henry W. Watson, John J. Collier and Eli Kirk Price also broke the ground.

A large assemblage and St. Peter's Church Choir (Third and Pine Streets) under the direction of Harold W. Gilbert, were present and led the singing.

Congressman Henry W. Watson (whose deceased wife furnished the funds) made an address.

Mrs. Elizabeth Garland, widow of Bishop Garland, was an interested onlooker at the breaking of the ground.

On July 13, 1932, the H. John Company staked out the ground, excavations of the rock began next day. The building permit was dated July 26, 1932 and contract price was \$136,360.

On August 16, the concrete forms were being placed. The outside of the Chapel is faced with local Wissahickon gneiss (stone) with Indiana limestone trimming. Some of the face stone was quarried from the cellar. The interior stone was from Glenmont, Ohio, known as Briar Hill sand stone. John J. Collier, the Treasurer of the Cathedral Chapter, died November 24, 1932, and another active member, Eli Kirk Price, died two months later.

On the fifth Diocesan Day the Blessing of the Foundation Stone in the east side of the Chapel was performed by Bishop Taitt, June 3, 1933. There were about 700 people in attendance.

On December 8, 1933, the first service of Evening Prayer was conducted in the Chapel by candlelight, due to the lateness of the hour. The recently appointed Canon Residentiary, the Rev. James M. Niblo, was in charge and preached. The second service was held on December 16, 1933. Before the third service the interior scaffold was taken away and electric lights were installed. From that time until October 27, 1934 services were held on Saturday afternoons at four o'clock.

During October, 1934 the altar and dossal were installed and chancel built of wood, in

preparation for the first service of Holy Communion. The Right Reverend Francis Marion Taitt celebrated the first communion on All Saints' Day, November 1, 1934. A memorial tablet to Mary Masden Vaughan was unveiled. The funds for the Chapel were willed by her daughter, Annie Masden Vaughan Watson.

In November, 1934 a soloist and organist were secured. February 3, 1935 the first person was baptized when the Rev. C. E. Ball baptized Miss America P. Law.

Since the first Communion, services are held every Sunday at 9 and 11 A. M. and at 4 P. M. Lay readers conduct the morning prayer service at 11 A. M.; other services are conducted by a clergyman.

On July 11, 1937, a Sunday School was started, with Mr. J. C. Flanders as superintendent. On November 1, 1937 a beautiful memorial oak retable was dedicated in memory of Florence Prall Scull by Bishop Taitt.

On July 10, 1938 ground was broken for St. Michael's Chapel (a mortuary chapel) adjoining the South Side of the Cathedral. The Rev. J. M. Niblo, Mr. Samuel F. Houston and others took part in the ceremony. During the summer, fall and winter the work progressed. The interior of the Cathedral was improved with a new, smooth floor, bishop's chair, choir pews and Cathedral chairs.

The new St. Michael's Chapel is built of the same kind of stone as the Cathedral. It has limestone spires at the corners with sculptured angel heads at their bases. A beautiful stained glass window is to go in. The stone for the Altar came from Palestine. Eleven Coats of Arms are sculptured on the ribs of the groined arches. Each has a meaning and a definite history.

The Chapel is floored with Tennessee and Tavernilla marbles. Two beautiful slabs of Tennessee marble cover the crypts. At the four bases of the arch ribs are sculptured. Sheaves of wheat and bunches of grapes represent the bread and wine in the Holy Communion. A stone credence is a part of the south wall.

The Chapel will be a place of quiet religious beauty and a joy forever.

On the seventh Diocesan Day, June 24, 1939, the Norman Altar was dedicated. It is centrally supported by a column from the thirteenth century cathedral at Lincoln England. Four other columns support the mensa, the stone of which came from Bath, England. The altar base rests on Tennessee marble. The face is also Tennessee marble and beneath are burial crypts. On the altar are a Flemish cross and brass candlesticks. On the wall over the altar is a green silk and gold embroidered banner, depicting the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove. During these improvements the Cathedral proper was extended 18 feet to the west, and a robing room was attached to the northwest corner.

The bodies of Bishop and Mrs. Garland were translated on October 18, 1939, from St. James the Less Churchyard and placed in crypts near the chapel altar. A slab of Cockysville marble, suitably inscribed, is in the floor over the bishop's crypt.

A memorial tablet nearby tells of the Bishop's selecting the Cathedral site. The tablet has a Bishop's staff or crozier and the letters, A. M. G. D. (*Ao Majorem Gloriam Dei*), translated "To the greater glory of God."

The entrance to the Cathedral is by a drive at 8630 Ridge Avenue. Services each Sunday are: Holy Communion, 9 A. M.; Morning Prayer, 11 A. M.; Evening Prayer, 4 P. M.

The Canon Residentiary has charge of the services.

The Lay Readers at the 11 A. M. service are: Samuel F. Houston, Senior Canon; Louis B. Runk, Treasurer and Canon; Frank B. Watson, architect of St. Mary's Chapel; Reed A. Morgan, Canon.

Other services are conducted by a clergyman.

One year after he had assisted in breaking for St. Michael's Chapel, Frederick Moulton died; his burial service was the first to be rendered in the Cathedral. He was in his eighty-third year.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above account of the Roxborough Cathedral has been contributed by Mr. Joseph E. J. McGee and has been approved by the Cathedral authorities.

## THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES

### THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MANAYUNK

*(Organized 1832)*

The first Presbyterian minister to come to Manayunk was the Rev. Albert Judson, a missionary sent out to the village from Philadelphia by the then newly organized Young Men's Missionary Society of the Fifth Presbyterian Church at Tenth and Arch Streets. At this time Manayunk was a settlement of 2,070 inhabitants and 317 dwellings situated between Green Lane and Shurs Lane and completely isolated from Philadelphia except for a stage coach which made the trip twice daily.

In the spring of 1832 Mr. Judson was succeeded in the work by a young student for the ministry from Fifth Church named Charles Brown. He conducted prayer meetings and did Sunday school teaching over a territory which included Manayunk, Mount Vernon, Upper Roxborough, Barren Hill, Falls of Schuylkill, and Lower Merion across the river. Mr. Brown connected himself at this time with the old Dutch Reformed Church on Cotton Street, which in doctrine and polity was close to the Presbyterian Church.

As a result of Mr. Brown's labors, the "First Presbyterian Church of Roxborough Township" was finally organized November 10, 1832. On November 18 the Sabbath school of the new church with seventy-nine pupils was formed and met in a stone building connected with Mr. Darrack's factory. Previous to this the children had met in the basement of the Dutch Reformed Church.

On December 15, 1832, the first pastor, James M. Davis, was ordained and installed. The church charter was granted in March, 1833. A small one-story building was erected as the First Church during Mr. Davis' pastorate, which ended in 1836.

In 1840 and again from 1843 to 1847 the church was without a regular pastor and was



struggling with debt until conditions improved in 1846.

For six months in 1847 the Rev. J. Henry Van Dyke, father of the famous Princeton preacher and professor, Dr. Henry Van Dyke, was the pastor of this church.

Dr. Andrew Culver next had a fruitful ministry of twenty years (1847-1867). In 1861 the membership was recorded as 225. Alterations and improvements in the church building up to 1867 made it practically as it is today. The parsonage was erected in 1870.

Another long and much appreciated pastorate was that of the Rev. Charles E. Burns (1878-1903). The location of the church near the Manayunk Station of the Pennsylvania Railroad caused much annoyance from the operation of trains through these years, but matters later improved with electrification of the line.

The Rev. Hugh B. McCrone served First Church from 1903 to 1910 in an efficient ministry. In 1939 Dr. McCrone returned to this community as supply pastor of the Wissahickon Presbyterian Church.

The most recent pastors have been:

The Rev. George N. Makely, 1911-1920.

The Rev. Frank H. Rose, 1920 to the present.

The sixteenth anniversary of Mr. Rose's ministry was observed in December, 1936 by a grateful people. The generous giving by the congregation, which so greatly increased under Mr. Makely, has continued to grow under Mr. Rose's leadership.

In 1939 the organ of the church was rebuilt at a cost of \$2500.00.

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#### THE ROXBOROUGH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Organized 1854)

This church is a daughter not of the old First Church of Manayunk but of the Fourth Reformed Church. The members of the Dutch Reformed Church who lived in Roxborough built their own meeting house at Ridge Avenue and Port Royal Avenue (Ship Lane) in 1835. In 1854 these people connected themselves with the Second Presbytery of Philadelphia and or-

ganized as the Roxborough Presbyterian Church.

The present pastor, the Rev. Frank G. Bossert, has served since 1919 and has recently announced his intended retirement. This constitutes his time of service in the community as the longest of any Protestant minister now active in Roxborough, Manayunk or Wissahickon.

The following is an outline of the history of the church since 1918:

In 1918 the Rev. Z. Montgomery Gibson was pastor of the church. He resigned in February, 1919 to become pastor of the Drexel Hill Presbyterian Church.

In May, 1919 the Rev. Frank G. Bossert became pastor after having served overseas in the great World War as a Y. M. C. A. secretary.

During the present pastorate the church has been painted on three occasions, electric lights have been installed, a concrete floor placed in the basement, stained glass windows placed as memorials and a new walk laid in front of the church.

In 1922 the church had its Colonial appearance restored by the removal of its plaster surfacing and the fine stone work pointed.

In 1923 the old spire was removed and a new belfry erected.

In 1929 the church auditorium was reconstructed.

During the last ten years the church has kept free of debt and has gone steadily forward. 340 persons have been added to the church during the present pastorate. A number have been lost through death and removal. The present membership is 254.

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#### THE LEVERINGTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Organized 1878)

The Leverington Presbyterian Church was organized May 9, 1878 with 87 charter members. It has had 6 pastors, namely: The Reverends Samuel Philips, A. A. Murphey, James W. Kirk, D.D., Dwight C. Hanna,

D.D., Herbert R. Burgess, D.D., and David A. Noble, Ph.D. For 40 years it has supported missionary work in China and during the past 19 years has had the Rev. Allan F. Vinton as its Home Missionary in the mountains of West Virginia, Tennessee and Kentucky. It has also given several of its children to the work of the ministry at home and abroad. During the last World War, 37 of its members served in the service overseas. Throughout its history its members have contributed most generously to the missionary and benevolent work of the church and in 1927 erected a new church and Sunday school building at the corner of Ridge Avenue and Hermitage Street, having moved from their old church structure at Ridge and Leverington Avenues. These new buildings are Gothic in design and their great beauty is almost completely structural. The organ, which was installed by the Mudler-Hunter Company, is a memorial to Mr. Robert M. Yahn. The beautiful set of chimes which have since been added, are a gift of Leverington's choir.

On the ancient and honorable records of the church it has been written, "May she never die. May she ever increase in membership and spirituality. May her cords ever lengthen and her stakes ever strengthen. May the blessing of the triune God ever rest upon her and may she ever have a brilliant record on the pages of church history. God speed thee, Leverington Presbyterian Church." For sixty-two years God has been answering this prayer. The church which began so modestly, has at this date a membership of 721 and boasts a fine Sunday school which, including the Home Department and the Cradle Roll, numbers 576. Mr. George B. McClennen has been its superintendent for the past fourteen years and is ably assisted by a large corps of efficient and consecrated officers and teachers. The Church and Sunday school are well organized, steadily growing, are preaching and living the Gospel and rejoice together in the use of their beautiful, adequately equipped buildings. Without the prayers, the labors and the loving sacrifices of her children, Leverington Church would never have been able

to erect these new buildings to the glory of God and the service of men.

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### THE WISSAHICKON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (Organized 1894)

In May, 1894 the Presbyterian Church at Wissahickon was organized by members from the First Church, Manayunk. They met for worship in 1892 in a warehouse on Terrace Street. When the church building at Ridge Avenue and Manayunk Avenue was begun in 1894, Dr. Burns, of the First Church, laid the cornerstone. Mr. R. Howard Taylor was the stated supply for the first two years. Mr. Wellington E. Loucks was the second stated supply. Before the end of 1894 the Rev. Daniel H. Martin became the first pastor and served until 1908. During his time the present church building was built and later enlarged.

Other pastors of the Wissahickon Church have been:

1908-1914.....	Dr. Elliot Field
1915-1919.....	Rev. John Hackett
1920-1925.....	Rev. E. C. Hibshman
1925-.....	Rev. J. G. Robinson
1926-1934.....	Rev. L. Wartena
1935-1939.....	Rev. R. L. Barbor
1939-.....	(supply) ..Rev. H. B. McCrone

In 1928, during the pastorate of Mr. Wartena, the modern, well planned Sunday School building was erected.

Under Dr. McCrone's capable leadership the church is looking hopefully forward.




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### THE LUTHERAN CHURCHES

#### BETHANIEN GERMAN LUTHERAN CHURCH (Organized 1845)

The Lutherans were the last of the major Protestant communions to enter the Twenty-



first Ward area. German speaking Lutherans organized in 1845 and in 1848 bought the lot on Martin Street in Roxborough where their cemetery is now situated. Here the first church building was erected and dedicated in 1851. A little Sunday School of eight children was also begun.

A second and larger church building was dedicated in 1874. In 1889 a Sunday School for English-speaking Lutherans which had been begun at Temperance Hall, Mansion and Levering Streets, led to the establishing of an independent congregation worshipping entirely in English. Its members were drawn mainly from Bethanien (Bethany) Church and formed the Epiphany Lutheran Church.

In 1891 by an alteration in the charter the official name of the German Church became "The German Evangelical Lutheran Bethanien Church of Manayunk and Roxborough."

By 1901 the parsonage at Pechin Street and Monastery Avenue was free of debt. In 1902 the church at Martin and Pechin Streets was re-dedicated after being enlarged and renovated at a cost of \$16,000.

In 1905, due to a struggle over the question of introducing English services, Grace Lutheran Church was formed by members of Bethanien congregation.

The basement of Bethanien Church was completed in 1913 at a cost of \$4,000.

The Rev. H. C. Schmieder (1905-1934) held the longest pastorate in this church. In his time the Seventy-fifth Jubilee was held (1920).

The Rev. S. G. von Bosse has been pastor since February 1, 1934. In 1939 the church was renovated at an approximate cost of \$6,000.

English services were introduced in 1934, but German services continue to be largely attended. The present membership (confirmed) is more than 450 and there are more than 400 on the role of the Sunday School.

Mr. Paul Knittel completes this year a quarter century as Sunday School Superintendent.

## THE EPIPHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH (Organized 1889)

As has already been said this church originated in a demand for the English language in Lutheran church services and Sunday School instruction. On Sunday evening, November 4, 1888, the first such service was held in Temperance Hall, Manayunk. In January, 1889, the Sunday School was begun. One pupil and two teachers attended the first service. In early spring of that year the congregation was formally organized and in May it was received into the Synod of the Ministerium of Pennsylvania.

The lot for a church building was purchased in January, 1891, at the corner of Green Lane and Silverwood Street. The cornerstone was laid on Trinity Sunday, 1893, and the church, erected at a cost of about \$6,000.00 was consecrated December 17 of the same year.

The first pastor, the Rev. L. Geschwind, served from June, 1890, to the autumn of 1893, when he resigned on account of ill health. He was followed by the Rev. C. P. Weiskotten (1894-1903). During his time the congregation became debt free.

The third pastor was the Rev. Carl H. Hirzel, who served Epiphany from 1904 to 1918. During his time the parsonage at 4406 Dexter Street was bought and paid for.

The present pastor, the Rev. Henry A. D. Wacker, came in September, 1919, directly from France, where he had been serving as a chaplain with the A. E. F.

In June, 1927, the congregation purchased ground at Ridge Avenue and Gorgas Lane, Roxborough, which became debt free in November, 1936.

In April, 1938, new pews were installed on the choir platform, and a new lecturn, pulpit, sanctuary rail and carpet were given to the church. Other interior improvements were made in time for the Golden Anniversary, January, 1939.

This church has long been outstanding for its benevolent contributions. It has also given four of its sons to the Christian Ministry, namely,

Willis Dillman, Stephen Hirzel, Robert F. Weiskotten and Thomas F. Weiskotten.

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GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
(Organized 1905)

A group of people in the Bethanien German Lutheran Church who desired services in English formed a new congregation in September, 1905, meeting at first in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lefort on Hermit Lane. A Sunday School was immediately organized. The charter was granted March 15, 1906. For a while services were held by the first pastor, the Rev. Hugo E. Meyer, Ph.D., in Lyceum Hall. A lot was soon bought at the northwest corner of Ridge and Roxborough Avenues, on which stood the old residence and barn of Andrew Wood of Revolutionary War fame in local history. The house was fitted up for church and Sunday School services. German services continued to be held in the morning. English services in the evening were very well attended.

Dr. Meyer served from 1905 to 1907. He was succeeded by the Rev. John W. Hauser. Under his supervision the cornerstone was laid in October, 1909, and the church was dedicated in 1910. The old house was torn down but the barn, historic scene of the attack by British soldiers on seventeen American troopers from the army encamped at Valley Forge, was left standing for a while and was converted into temporary use as a church while the church building was under construction.

The Rev. Mr. Hauser was called to Chester, Pa., in 1911 and was succeeded in 1912 by the Rev. Paul Z. Strodach, D.D., who remained until 1919. In his time the memorial organ was installed at the close of the World War to commemorate both the Revolutionary War heroes and the men who had lately entered their country's service from the church including the two Gerhard brothers who gave their lives. A new altar and reredus were also installed.

The Rev. Charles F. Dapp, Ph.D., D.D., came in 1922 and left at the end of October, 1927. During his pastorate the church was entirely renovated and rededicated and a stone

wall was built around most of the church lawn on the street side at a cost of \$2,000.00.

When Dr. Dapp accepted a call to the presidency of Wagner College, Staten Island, the Rev. William H. Cooper was called and entered upon his duties November 13, 1928. The church debt, which had been materially reduced by his two predecessors, was further reduced by \$3,000.00 in 1929-1930. An additional reduction of \$650.00 has been effected since 1932, leaving a present debt of \$3,850.00. The steady growth which has characterized the church from the beginning has continued of late years, particularly in the Sunday School, which enrolls about 275 and has a high percentage of average attendance.

Since 1936 a flourishing Junior Choir and an active Men's League and Young Women's Auxiliary have been organized.



THE MENNONITES

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FAITH CHAPEL OF THE MENNONITE BRETHREN  
IN CHRIST CHURCH  
(Opened 1935)

The Mennonites were among the first settlers of Germantown and Roxborough and William Rittenhouse was their first minister. The most recently organized religious group in Roxborough are, strangely enough, Mennonites with the simplicity of their faith and practice unchanged after 250 years.

The Chapel of the Mennonites, located in Roxborough, was opened on January 26, 1935, by Pastor J. B. Henry, at 419 Conarroe Street.

The name "Faith Chapel" was suggested by the people of Roxborough who attended the services.

A Sunday School was organized by the Pastor who was its first Superintendent.

The present officers are:

Mr. George S. Campbell

*S. S. Superintendent*

Mr. LeRoy Snyder . . . . . *S. S. Secretary*

Mr. Ralph Beatty . . . . . *S. S. Treasurer*



#### CHAPEL OFFICERS

Pastor: Rev. J. B. Henry, 4420 Van Kirk St.

Class Leader: Mr. W. D. Campbell.

Pastor's Steward: Mrs. Gladys Beatty.

Rent Fund Receiver: Mrs. Minnie Thomas.

Since the work is only a Chapel, the membership is very small. Sunday School and church worship are held every Sunday afternoon.

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#### OTHER RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

In addition to the churches of the community which have been described above, two others might have been mentioned as belonging within the limits of Roxborough Township. These are the Falls of Schuylkill Presbyterian Church and Grace Reformed Episcopal Church, both on Ridge Avenue above Midvale Avenue. A considerable portion of the Roman Catholic parish of St. Bridget also belongs historically within these limits. But for all practical purposes they are a part of the distinct community known as the Falls of Schuylkill and so are omitted from our sketch.

#### UNDENOMINATIONAL WORK

There are, however, certain organized religious activities other than the churches within Roxborough, Wissahickon, and Mauayunk which should receive mention. The first of these is the Henry Avenue Chapel erected on Henry Avenue below Rector Street about 1930. This chapel contains a basement auditorium and upstairs classroom; in the rear is an outdoor platform auditorium and a two-story parsonage adjoins. In the first years after erection evening classes of the American Theological Seminary, incorporated at Wilmington, Delaware, met here. Subsequently these classes were transferred to the Central Y. M. C. A. in Philadelphia and to Wilmington, where this interdenominational institution has had a remarkable development under the leadership of its initiator, the Rev. George J. Apel, Jr.

Mr. Apel, a former minister at the Wissahickon Baptist Church, also served the Gospel Church of Roxborough, which met at the Henry Avenue Chapel. Sunday School and preaching

services have continued to be held here more or less regularly down to the present time.

A very interesting, although little known work is that of the Gospel Hall, situated in a storeroom at 5156 Ridge Avenue. The Gospel Hall activity, both locally and elsewhere, is a lay preaching movement which includes street preaching and Sunday School work. There is no ordained minister but laymen, following as they believe, guidance of the Holy Spirit, preach by turns, usually in alphabetical order. The following men have been preaching at the Wissahickon Gospel Hall: Albert Berry, Thomas Cragemile, James Dunbar, William Jaeger, George Lyon, James Martin. The work in Wissahickon is at least forty years old and started in the old Stroud Building further down the Ridge from the present Hall. Only the men may teach in public, while the women give private religious instruction to the children. While carrying no denominational label, the Gospel Hall people recognize all "born-again" Christians as brethren.

The Wissahickon Gospel Hall holds Sunday School and Breaking of Bread on Sunday morning, Gospel preaching on Sunday evening, Bible reading on Tuesday evening, prayer meetings on Thursday evening, and a Friday evening meeting for children.

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#### THE CLERGY CLUB OF THE TWENTY-FIRST WARD AND VICINITY

The Clergy Club of the Twenty-first Ward is primarily a social or fellowship group of most of the Protestant clergy, including some outside of Roxborough, Manayunk, and Wissahickon. Because the Club provides some means of concerted local planning and action by Protestants it may be mentioned here as a religious activity. The Clergy Club meets at the various churches the fourth Tuesday of every month from September to April inclusive. In the quarter century of its existence the Club has been contributing steadily to increased harmony and cooperation between both ministers and churches. We have this from the personal

testimony of its oldest and most honored member, the Rev. C. S. Mervine, retired, who is still able to attend the meetings in his ninetieth year and who has been in the Club from its beginning.

The officers of the Clergy Club in 1939-1940 were the Rev. Carroll M. Bates, President; the Rev. William H. Cooper, Secretary-Treasurer. The officers-elect for 1940-1941 are the Rev. Bickley B. Wilgus, President; the Rev. Martin Hoeksema, Secretary-Treasurer.

Throughout the fall and winter service are conducted by the Clergy Club on Sunday afternoons at the Roxborough Home for Women. Services were formerly conducted weekly at Memorial Hospital. It is planned to resume the hospital services in 1940-1941.

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#### THE MINISTERS' WIVES' CLUB

This organization has for several years past performed the same function among the ministers' wives as the Clergy Club has among the ministers. Meetings are held every third Wednesday of the month from October to June inclusive. The Ministers' Wives' Club sponsors the annual World Day of Prayer each winter in this community.

Officers in 1939-1940 were:

*President* . . . . . Mrs. H. A. D. Wacker  
*Vice-President* . . . . . Mrs. S. G. von Bosse  
*Recording Secretary* . . Mrs. Wm. B. Forney  
*Corresponding Secretary and Treasurer*,  
Mrs. F. R. McArthur

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#### THE SALVATION ARMY

The work of the Salvation Army in Roxborough began in 1889. The present Hall is on Ridge Avenue just above Leverington Avenue. Captain John Strain is in charge of the local Corps. He was preceded by Captain James Hall (1935-1937). Both these men have been active members of the local Clergy Club and have maintained cordial relations with the churches. Meanwhile the work of the Army has flourished.

In November, 1938 Roxborough was chosen

as the location for a new Salvation Army Social Service Center to serve the metropolitan area of Philadelphia. This is the largest institution of its kind in the world conducted by the Salvation Army. It occupies a large remodeled factory at Krams Avenue and Peachin Street and cares at present for 201 men, who are given both shelter and employment and are aided towards rehabilitation.

On March 10, 1940, a new auditorium within this building was publicly dedicated. Thursday night meetings are conducted here regularly for the men, whose attendance is voluntary. These meetings are frequently addressed by the local clergy.

About thirty persons who are local residents of the community are employees of the Social Service Institution.

The present staff consists of Major Richard E. Baggs, Executive Secretary; Adjutant H. G. Sparks, Captain W. F. Hathorn, Major Eugene Mott, and Major A. Herring.

It may be added that Major Samuel Hepburn, Philadelphia's new Divisional Commander, is a resident of Roxborough, his home since 1939 being at 601 Walnut Lane.

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#### THE FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST WARD

No history of Roxborough and vicinity could be complete without some account of the traditional Fourth of July parades and picnics in which all the Sunday Schools and churches, including the Roman Catholics, have a part.

This year's observance is the one hundred tenth, the first picnic having been planned by Samuel Lawson of the Fourth Reformed Church in 1831. He had come three years before from Rawdon Hall, Yorkshire, England, where a basket picnic was customary among the Sunday Schools on Whit Friday or Whit Monday. The first picnic was held on a hillside in Manayunk.

The diary of Charles Brown, the second missionary to serve the Dutche (Fourth) Reformed Church thus describes the second celebration in 1832:



"July 5th—Yesterday three of our Sunday Schools, Reformed, Baptist, and Methodist, comprising about three hundred and fifty scholars, celebrated the anniversary of our National Independence in a pious and consistent manner by a parade to the woods. The procession had a good effect. The children sang hymns as they walked through the streets, which caused tears to flow down the cheeks of strong men. After the walk the scholars were collected in a grove, where the 'Declaration' was read by a pupil, followed with appropriate addresses by several of us." (quoted from A. W. Whitaker's *Historical Review of the First Presbyterian Church of Manayunk*, 1932, page 14).

The observance grew, with inevitable changes of custom and practice from decade to decade. Mr. Joseph Miles, in his interesting Historical Sketch written for the Official Programme of the 1931 Celebration, describes it in the 1880's:

"During the dull '80's the scholars were content to file through the streets, two by two, with the teacher at the head of each class, the superintendent at the head; a large American flag and a banner bearing the name of the school, leading the procession; each scholar with a tincup suspended from the neck and carrying a small American flag."

Mr. Miles goes on to say: "In the gay '90's novelties of one kind or another were introduced and each school vied with the others to produce the best 'turnout.'"

The twentieth century, the century of the great trusts and corporations, brought in the spirit of combination. But at first it was combination without cooperation. We quote once more from Mr. Miles:

"In the early part of the new century, Mt. Zion M. E., Ebenezer M. E., and Central M. E. Sunday Schools combined and went to Gorgas Woods. The question arose as to which school would take the lead in the parade. Like Amos and Andy and Brother Crawford, each one voted for himself. To break the deadlock they marched three abreast, one from each school.

"In 1909 at the suggestion of the Epiphany English Lutheran Sunday School, instead of the

schools marching to their woods individually, ten of the Sunday Schools—Bethany Lutheran, Talmage Memorial, Roxborough Baptist, Grace Lutheran, Fourth Reformed, Central M. E., Epiphany Lutheran, Ebenezer M. E., Leverington Presbyterian and Emmanuel M. E. Sunday Schools—combined and marched out the widest street in the community, Lyceum Avenue, Roxborough. This arrangement proved so successful that practically all the Sunday Schools have joined it."

The Roman Catholic parochial schools maintain separate lines of march but like the Protestant Sunday Schools have their regular places in the woods and enter fully into the spirit of the day. St. John the Baptist's march to their woods by way of Roxborough Avenue and Holy Family by way of Hermitage Street.

According to figures supplied for this book by Mr. John Levins, Secretary of the general



Grand Old Tree in front of Hattal Taylor Post V. F. W. No. 333, has shaded parade onlookers for many years.

Fourth of July Committee, the number of Sunday Schools in the united parade remained ten from 1909 to 1916 inclusive. In 1917 eleven paraded together. By 1924 the number had risen to seventeen. In the centennial year, 1931, twenty-one schools joined in a mammoth parade and that number has since been maintained. About six thousand marchers participate, with many thousands more lining the streets and sidewalks.

In the Hundredth Anniversary year of 1931 a memorial plaque was erected on the grounds of the Fourth Reformed Church to the memory of Samuel Lawson, the originator of the Fourth of July picnics.

The cost of the plaque was defrayed by contributions of pennies from pupils of all the Sunday Schools, so it was a tribute in which every participant in the Anniversary parade was represented by a contribution.

It was unveiled, with proper services, on Sunday, June 21, at 2:00 P. M. Mr. Howard Lukens delivered the address. A large crowd was in attendance. Mr. C. W. Preston and Mr. Robert L. Hain comprised the committee that planned this project.

In 1935 the first reviewing stand was erected on Lyceum Avenue near the Ridge. In 1936 denominational and city officials were invited to review the parade.

The parade of 1938 was the thirtieth annual combined parade, and this fact was properly celebrated in the parade display.

It is the intention of the General Parade Committee to cooperate with the 1940 celebration committee. Five of its members are acting as representatives in this matter—Wm. B. Forney, Jr., J. R. Christy, Jos. R. Sumner, Fred Carbaugh and Harry D. Evans.

This same committee is planning properly to celebrate the 110th Anniversary of the Fourth of July observance in 1941.

The following is a list of the Chief Marshals who have served in the combined parades:

1909 .....	Wm. Levering
1910 .....	Wm. Levering
1911 .....	Charles Blum

1912 .....	Charles Blum
1913 .....	Horace V. McFadyen
1914 .....	Horace V. McFadyen
1915 .....	Hiram L. Wynne
1916 .....	Hiram L. Wynne
1917 .....	Hiram L. Wynne
1918 .....	Howard M. Cantrell
1919 .....	Howard M. Cantrell
1920 .....	C. Walter Dunlap
1921 .....	Wm. Levering
1922 .....	Wm. Levering
1923 .....	Wm. Levering
1924 .....	Russell Keely
1925 .....	William Flanagan
1926 .....	William Flanagan
1927 .....	William Flanagan
1928 .....	William Flanagan
1929 .....	William Flanagan
1930 .....	William Flanagan
1931 .....	William Flanagan
1932 .....	Robert L. Hain
1933 .....	Wm. B. Forney, Jr.
1934 .....	Wm. B. Forney, Jr.
1935 .....	Wm. B. Forney, Jr.
1936 .....	John Whitaker
1937 .....	John Whitaker
1938 .....	Fred Carbaugh
1939 .....	Fred Carbaugh
1940 .....	Fred Carbaugh

The first officers of the Parade Committee were, in 1909:

<i>President</i> .....	B. W. Hagy
<i>Vice-President</i> .....	J. Hunsberger
<i>Secretary-Treasurer</i> .....	J. Harry Stephan

The present officers are:

<i>President</i> ....	C. W. Preston (since 1924)
<i>Vice-President</i> .....	No longer elected
<i>Secretary-Treasurer</i> ,	

John Levins (since 1926)

## OUR LOCAL INSTITUTIONS

This community is deservedly proud of its three institutions,—two Homes and a Hospital. It has been decided, after serious consideration, not to incorporate their history in this book. In a very proper sense their history is their own



and does not blend readily with the busy rush of events outside their walls. But we as members of the community are and should be ever conscious of these institutions and their unceasing service to the community. We give them brief mention.

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#### THE ROXBOROUGH HOME FOR WOMEN

The first of these in point of time is the Roxborough Home for Women, popularly known as the "Gorgas Home," on East Leverington Avenue. It was ready for occupancy in 1887, the service of House Blessing occurring September 21 of that year. Miss Susan Gorgas was its benefactress and Miss Caroline Thornton its first matron. The home is endowed and has never conducted a financial campaign.

The Home originally accommodated eighteen members. After its enlargement in June, 1920, it took care of thirty persons. It has usually been fully occupied. The majority of the present family are enjoying life in their eighties. The last twenty years have been the best in the Home from the standpoint of health.

Miss Sophie Dundore, the present matron, has served faithfully since 1920. She has tendered her resignation, which is to be effective June 1, 1940.

The officers of the Board include: Mrs. William H. Stafford, President; Mrs. J. J. Foulkrod, Vice-President; Mrs. Howard Fussell, Secretary; Mrs. Robert Yahn, Treasurer.

The people of Roxborough, Manayunk, and Wissahickon have always taken a kindly interest in the residents of the Home. Children, young people, friends, relatives, neighbors, and clergymen frequent the place and bring cheer at many times and in many ways. The Home in its turn takes an interest in the community. Its beautiful grounds are a scenic spot. Its roses have repeatedly taken prizes at the local Flower Show. Its more active members are often seen on the street, in the stores, and at the churches.

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#### THE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Established in 1890 as St. Timothy's Hospital, a direct outgrowth of the benefactions of mem-

bers of that parish, Memorial Hospital, now in a full sense a community institution, celebrates this year its fiftieth birthday.

A detailed and accurate anniversary history of the hospital has been written by Mr. Stanley Hart Cauffman. It has appeared serially in *The Suburban Press*, beginning with the issue of March 14, 1940, under the title *The House of Mercy*. Mr. Cauffman's history is dedicated to the late Treasurer of Memorial Hospital, William Herbert Stafford, and will appear in book form.

Occupying almost an entire city block on Ridge Avenue between Rector Street and Jamestown Avenue, Memorial Hospital is at the very heart of old Roxborough Township, now the Twenty-first Ward. The story of the community's rally to its support in 1920, the most critical year of its history, and of its subsequent survival and expansion is one that well deserves the telling in a book like that by Mr. Cauffman.

There is every evidence of increased community interest and support in this Anniversary Year at Roxborough and its hospital.

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#### THE NORTHERN HOME

This institution was founded in 1853 as "The Northern Home for Friendless Children." After 1855 it was merged with the Institute for Soldiers' and Sailors' Orphans. In those years it was not a local institution but was situated at Twenty-third and Brown Streets, Philadelphia. In 1928 it moved to its present and more attractive location in Wissahickon.

The Northern Home is a non-sectarian home for dependent boys and girls whose homes have been broken up through sickness or domestic tragedies. The age of admission is from four to twelve years.

Miss Marguerite Shank is Superintendent. Her predecessor was Mr. R. C. Flanders.

The membership has varied in recent years from about 100 to more than 127. Between twenty and thirty are admitted yearly and a like number are dismissed. The boys outnumber the girls about two to one.

As in the case of the Roxborough Home for

Women many friendly contacts are maintained between the institution and the community. The children are permitted to attend the local Sunday Schools of their preference.



## THE EXTERNAL GROWTH OF TWENTY YEARS

Every community has a body as well as a soul. The body consists not only of its geographic and geologic locale and environment but also of its arteries of traffic, its houses and buildings, its bridges and monuments.

Ours is an old community in the New World of America. When it began, the America which we know today was a dream of the future and most of the America that was then was ruled by the Red Man.

It is a striking fact, in view of all this, that the last twenty or twenty-two years in Roxborough, Manayunk, and Wissahickon have witnessed as many physical changes and have provided as much external progress as usually comes only to new and rapidly growing settlements.

We have not grown greatly in population in this period. The Federal census of 1920 returned a figure of 38,194 for the Twenty-first Ward of Philadelphia. There were 1,051 places of business of all kinds and 8,408 dwellings. The census of 1930 reported a population of 40,759, an increase of less than three thousand in ten years. By 1930 the number of dwellings had actually decreased to 8,401, reflecting a shortage of housing which remains characteristic to this day. The number of places of business had fallen by 1930 to 808, a decrease of more than twenty per cent. The number of manufacturing plants and shops had decreased even more sharply, from 195 in 1920 to 126 in 1930. We were less of an industrial and more of a residential community after those ten years of drastic change.

The 1940 census figures are not available as we write. Estimates give us a population today of no more than 42,000. But census figures fail

by far to tell of our real external growth in these years.

Let the reader picture, if he can, this community of ours at the close of the first World War. There was no Henry Avenue Bridge, no bus transportation of any kind; no Philadelphia trolley service except on Main Street, Manayunk; there was no city transportation available to Germantown except by way of Midvale Avenue. There was no Roxborough public high school and there were no parochial high schools in Manayunk. There were no beautiful, modern school buildings for Levering, Dobson, and Shawmont schools. There was no Recreation Center on Ridge Avenue,—only an unimproved stretch of ground unfit for a playground. Gorgas Park was similarly unimproved and in wretched condition. The little park now situated in front of St. John the Baptist's Church was a block of poor houses, unsightly in themselves and hiding at the same time the fine proportions of the church tower. Dangerous grade crossings still existed along the railroads in Manayunk and Wissahickon.

The streets, especially the main thoroughfares, were so badly paved as to be a standing reproach not only to the community but to the City of Philadelphia. We find the Chronicle and Advertiser reporting on the morning of July 4, 1918 that a shower had fallen the night before, filling the holes on Ridge Avenue with water so that the Sunday School parade of that year "resembled a University Snake Dance" to avoid stepping into the numerous puddles. Meanwhile the citizens, who had suffered the previous May from a four-day strike on the trolley line of the Reading Light and Transit Co., which then connected Wissahickon and Roxborough with Barren Hill and Norristown, were made still more irate by the announcement of that Company that beginning August 1, 1918 the fare would be increased from six to eight cents.

This brought storms of new criticism and sarcasm into the columns of The Chronicle and Advertiser. One lady complained to the editor, the Rev. W. B. Forney: "When the fare was



five cents we had to get off at the corner. When it is eight cents they bring you in the yard. *But when it is fifteen they will take you all the way into the house.*" For the benefit of the innocent modern reader who has probably never experienced a trolley wreck, we hasten to explain that the lady of 1918 was making a sarcastic reference to the habit which the old trolley had of going off the track. Usually these frequent happenings were harmless diversions, highly entertaining to small boys and vexing to everybody else, especially the motormen and conductors. But occasions are actually on record where the errant trolley cars ran into people's yards and even collided with their front porches.

In fairness to the employees of the old trolley lines, many of whom were local men, we include this further bit of history from *The Chronicle and Advertiser* of February 19, 1920: Storms of snow, hail, and rain had recently occurred. On Ridge Avenue above Hermitage Street the snow covered the fences. The local paper, after having given generous space to the much-merited criticisms of the trolleys, was equally generous in that issue in praising "the efficient work" of the local trolley men who had worked indefatigably to clear the tracks and keep the cars running.

It is difficult for a young high school lad of 1940 or a boy or girl in sixth or seventh grade today to realize what were the handicaps and hardships of living in this part of Philadelphia when these conditions existed. Parents justly complained in the years before 1924 of the expense of sending their children over two separate trolley systems to the Germantown High School. Free transportation for high school pupils from Roxborough was again and again demanded from the Board of Education, but without avail.

But the inhabitants of this Ward, deeply dissatisfied and constantly annoyed as they were, knew what they wanted. Their representatives in Council, men like Dr. Richard L. Entwisle and Councilman Stott, labored in season and out of season for the needed improvements. The Manayunk Business Men's Association was

also forward looking and active, especially concerning the repaving of Main Street, but also concerning community affairs such as the monument to the World War dead in Gorgas Park. The editor of *The Chronicle and Advertiser*, Dr. Forney, welcomed the suggestions of leading citizens in his columns. The Board of Trade agitated for the repaving of Ridge Avenue, which it finally secured in 1920, with a city appropriation of \$112,000, and took steps to aid Memorial Hospital in its extreme financial distress at the end of 1919.

Little by little the community of twenty years ago rose out of its backward and neglected condition and began to enjoy its long overdue advantages.

The following items indicate how the march of progress was made in two decades:

September, 1915 to August, 1918—Building of Pennsylvania Railroad Bridge over the Schuylkill; elimination of grade crossings and improved facilities at Manayunk Station.

November, 1926 to September, 1930—Elimination of grade crossings by the Reading Company from Wissahickon to Fountain Street, including elevated tracks on Cresson Street. Approximate cost, five million dollars.

1917, November 12, 1932—Campaigning for Henry Avenue Bridge, delayed by war, finally resulted in erection of bridge and completion of roadway. Opened for traffic November 12, after impressive dedication to memory of war heroes, November 11, 1932.

December 13, 1931—Route "R" bus line, Erie Avenue to Barren Hill, went into operation. Replaced old trolley line and gave Roxborough first direct connection with city.

December 13, 1931—Route "Z" bus line started from Wissahickon Creek and Ridge Avenue to Main Street and Leverington Avenue. Route finally changed December 1, 1939 after repairing of Manayunk Avenue, using the latter all the way from Ridge Avenue to Lyceum Avenue.

April to July, 1920 and April to June, 1935—Two different repavings of Ridge Avenue. The first in 1920, from Lemonte Street to City Line, continuing partial repaving done in 1919 from

Lyceum Avenue to Lemonte Street. The second in 1935, removing old car tracks from Ridge and Rochelle Avenue to Fairthorne Avenue at approximate cost of \$114,000.

Still more recently, Roxborough and Wissahickon have both benefited by the extension of the "E" bus line from Germantown, begun in

the 1920's, to Sixty-ninth and Market Streets, an additional ride of twenty-five or thirty minutes on a high speed line at no increase in fare.

Such has been the external growth of twenty years. The public-spirited vision and effort of the few have redounded to the benefit of the many.





MAP OF  
ROXBOROUGH  
TWENTY FIRST WARD  
PHILA. PA.



- 31—Old Spout Lane School  
 32—St. John's Catholic Church  
 33—St. Joseph's Catholic Church  
 34—North Light's Club  
 35—St. Mary's Catholic Church  
 36—Monahan's Catholic Church  
 37—St. Lucy's Catholic Church  
 38—St. Paul's Catholic Church  
 39—St. Mary's Presbyterian Church  
 40—St. David's P. E. Church  
 41—St. David's Library  
 42—Carnegie Library  
 43—Carnegie Public School  
 44—St. Vernon Baptist Church  
 45—Holy Family Catholic Church  
 46—McDonnell Paper Mill

KEY TO BUILDINGS

- 16—Grace Lutheran Church  
 17—German Lutheran Church  
 18—F. W. Nelson's Church  
 19—Galilee Baptist Church  
 20—Roxborough Memorial Hospital  
 21—St. Timothy's P. E. Church  
 22—Talmage Memorial Church  
 23—St. John's High School  
 24—Burt Mansion  
 25—Wissenschaften Presbyterian Church  
 26—Carnegie Library  
 27—Wissenschaften Public School  
 28—Wissenschaften Baptist Church  
 29—Wissenschaften M. E. Church  
 30—St. Stephen's P. E. Church

- Mittenhouse Paper Mill 1890  
 Alford's Public School  
 Alford's M. E. Church  
 Foxborough Presbyterian Church  
 Foxborough M. E. Church  
 Foxborough Public School  
 St. Alban's P. E. Church  
 Foxborough High School  
 Foxborough Presbyterian Church  
 Foxborough Lutheran Church  
 Foxborough Baptist Church  
 Foxborough Public School

Lyceum Avenue to Lemonte Street. The second in 1935, removing old car tracks from Ridge and Rochelle Avenue to Fairthorne Avenue at approximate cost of \$114,000.

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- KEY TO BUILDINGS**
- |                                    |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 1—Rittenhouse Paper Mill, 1690     | 16—Grace Lutheran Church           | 31—Old Shurs Lane School               |
| 2—Alfred Crease Public School      | 17—German Lutheran Church          | 32—St. John's Catholic Church          |
| 3—Blue Bell M. E. Church           | 18—Fourth Reformed Church          | 33—St. Joseph's Polish Catholic Church |
| 4—Protestant Episcopal Cathedral   | 19—Galilee Baptist Church          | 34—North Light Boy's Club              |
| 5—Roxborough Presbyterian Church   | 20—Roxborough Memorial Hospital    | 35—St. Mary's Catholic Church          |
| 6—Roxborough M. E. Church          | 21—St. Timothy's P. E. Church      | 36—Manayunk Baptist Church             |
| 7—Shawmont Public School           | 22—Talmage Memorial Church         | 37—St. Lucy's Catholic Church          |
| 8—St. Alban's P. E. Church         | 23—St. John's High School          | 38—Joel Cook Public School             |
| 9—Roxborough High School           | 24—Burt Mansion                    | 39—Manayunk Presbyterian Church        |
| 10—Leverington Presbyterian Church | 25—Wissahickon Presbyterian Church | 40—St. David's P. E. Church            |
| 11—First M. E. Church              | 26—Carnegie Library                | 41—Stevens Library                     |
| 12—Epiphany Lutheran Church        | 27—Wissahickon Public School       | 42—Carnegie Library                    |
| 13—Roxborough Lyceum               | 28—Wissahickon Baptist Church      | 43—Dobson Public School                |
| 14—Roxborough Baptist Church       | 29—Wissahickon M. E. Church        | 44—Mt. Vernon Baptist Church           |
| 15—Levering Public School          | 30—St. Stephen's P. E. Church      | 45—Holy Family Catholic Church         |
|                                    |                                    | 46—McDowell Paper Mill                 |

MAP OF  
ROXBOROUGH  
TWENTY FIRST WARD  
PHILA. PA.



Published by the  
City of Philadelphia  
Public School  
E. Chas.

# KEY TO BUILDINGS

Luxemburg

Wissahickon Presbyterian Church  
Carnegie Library  
Wissahickon Public  
School

F A I R M

P A A

H E A D

H E A D

H E A D

H E A D

H E A D

SCHUYLKILL

## LOXBOROUGH

TWENTY FIRST WARD

PHILA. PA.



## APPENDIX

A few reports of local organizations have been secured in time for inclusion in our Historical Sketch but too late to be put in their proper order. Other omissions may have occurred against our will and much to our regret, which it will be impossible to make up for, even in an appendix.

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### THE WILLIAM B. STEPHENS

#### MEMORIAL LIBRARY

*(Opened 1911)*

The William B. Stephens Memorial Library on Krams Avenue, Manayunk, was the gift of the widow of the man for whom it was named. Mr. Stephens, a textile manufacturer, had been a great reader and lover of books. After his death, Dr. J. Frederick Herbert, an eye specialist, persuaded Mrs. Stephens, one of his patients, to memorialize her deceased husband by founding this library, with special attention to textile and medical literature. Patterned after a library of this type in Colorado Springs, the Stephens Library was established and opened March 25, 1911 with a reception in the parish house of St. David's Church. John Wanamaker and other prominent citizens of Philadelphia were invited and attended.

The first librarian was Miss Katherine H. Shoemaker. Her assistant was Mary J. Wetzel. Miss Shoemaker retired in 1928 and died soon thereafter. On November 16, 1928, Mrs. Edna M. Alrich came in her place and is the present librarian.

The Stephens Memorial Library is well supplied with scientific books, English literature, and periodicals. There are (1940) 9,050 books. Dr. J. F. Herbert, M.D., a son of the Dr. Herbert mentioned above, is trustee. This reference library is greatly enjoyed by those who make use of it.

## THE PARENTS' ASSOCIATION AND LYCEUM OF

### THE TWENTY-FIRST WARD

*(Organized 1921)*

This association has interested itself in all the public schools of the Ward since 1921 and in the Roxborough High School since its beginning. In 1939 the Wissahickon School formed its own association and is no longer visited by this organization.

The first president was Dr. Wm. H. Hoedt. Mr. Charles Flanagan was president in 1924 and again in 1929-1939. Mr. Owen B. G. Fullaway is president in 1940. Mr. Fred Carbaugh is vice-president; Mrs. Charles Flanagan is secretary, and Mr. Amos J. Taylor is treasurer.

The Parents' Association has from its beginning maintained scholarship awards to the amount of forty dollars annually. It took the initiative through Dr. Raymond Bailey, its president, in 1923, to establish an athletic field at the Roxborough High School. The hilly ground back of the school was leveled, an immense hollow filled in with thousands of cubic feet of earth removed from the hillside, and stands and a field house were erected. The Board of Education cooperated through Mr. Charles Flanagan's affiliation with it. Mr. W. T. Westerman, a vice-president of the Association, first conceived this idea and worked at it most consistently. The Athletic Field is therefore named after him and the Field House after the late Benjamin A. Kline, a popular teacher at the Roxborough High School.

The Association also took an interest in the orchestra of the high school and secured private tutoring in music for its players. It has each year brought the subject of public education before parents and has provided a fine series of entertainments. Two meetings are held annually at the high school and one at each of the elementary schools.

THE WISSAHICKON VALLEY HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

(Founded 1926)

The following were the original officers:

*President*.....Stanley Hart Cauffman

*Vice-President*.....J. Ellwood Barrett

*Historian*.....James K. Helms

*Secretary*.....Joseph S. Miles

*Treasurer*.....Logan M. Dayton

The present officers (1940) are:

*President*.....Stanley Hart Cauffman

*Vice-President*.....James K. Helms

*Historian*.....A. C. Chadwick, Jr.

*Secretary*.....William B. Forney, Jr.

*Treasurer*.....J. Ellwood Barrett

Activities: Gathering material for this history; annual art show in memory of Joseph S. Miles; support of various patriotic and historical activities; the collection and preservation of historic sites, records, papers.

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THE INDEPENDENT ORDER OF ODD FELLOWS  
ROXBOROUGH LODGE No. 66

(Local Organization Since 1841)

This Lodge, meeting in the second floor of the building at the northwest corner of Ridge

and Lyceum Avenues, is one of the oldest and most favorably known fraternal societies in the Ward. Next year (1941) it plans to celebrate its Centennial Anniversary.

Mr. Harry Peterson is Noble Grand (the highest officer) and Mr. J. Gordon Beaver is Secretary.



We are sorry to have no information as this book goes to press concerning Keystone Council No. 11, Independent Order of American Mechanics and the Knights of Malta.



Acknowledgments: The splendid photograph of the Cathedral Church of Christ was made by Mr. William Crawford Faust. The photographs of Henry Avenue Bridge and the Old World Settings were made by Mr. John Cholerton. The sketch of the Grand Old Tree was made by Mrs. Helen Barrett.

The Container Corporation of America made a splendid contribution to the success of this book.

Miss Jane Butler was of great assistance to Miss Anne Searle, Secretary.





















